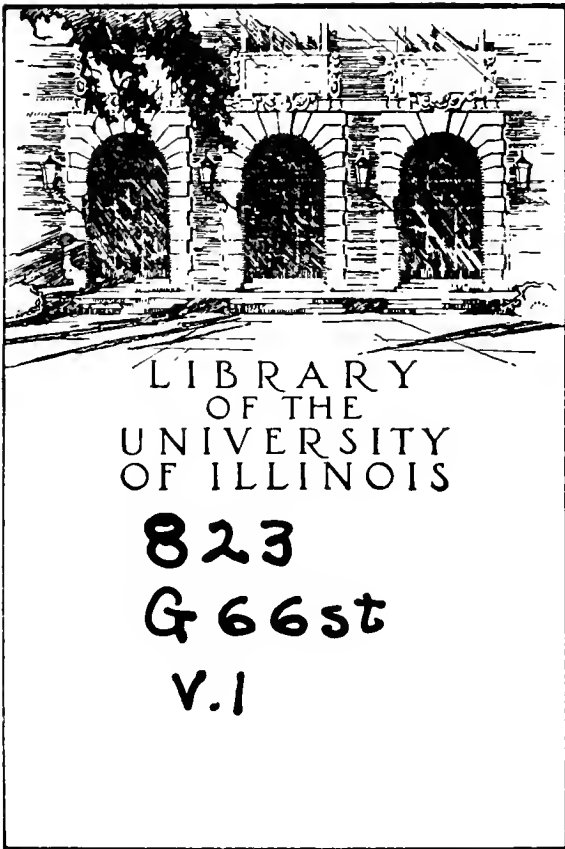




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*Henry Toller*

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S T O R Y

OF A

ROYAL FAVOURITE.

BY

M R S. G O R E.

“ No scandal about Queen Elizabeth, I hope ? ”

THE CRITIC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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# THE STORY

OF A

## ROYAL FAVOURITE.

### CHAPTER I.

When I ope my lips, let no dog bark !

SHAKSPEARE.

Le peu que j'ai à dire est d'une si naïve simplicité, que je ne sais à quel saint de rhétorique ancienne ou moderne me vouer, pour ne pas être maudit du peu bienveillant lecteur ! Je ne sais comment un esprit oxidé et sur-oxidé par les travers du temps actuel, acceptera cette simplicité niaise !

CHASLES.

LET no impertinent critic pretend to inquire by what especial privilege an individual of my species and exiguity is enabled to lay before the world the secrets of its little soul ! Suffice it

VOL. I.

B

that, as Mrs. Dalgairus borrowed the powerful pen of Basil Hall, and Alexander Selkirk the more masterly hand of Defoe, I, Rattle, have engaged for my private secretary one of the most practised scribblers going.—Moses or Mechi could do no more !

I had some thoughts, dear public, of prefacing my memoirs by my portrait, like Mrs. Maberly's Emily, or Mrs. Margery Meanwell, renowned in story as Goody Two Shoes. Nay, I have little doubt that, in compliment to the ancestors I represent and company I keep, Count D'Orsay might be induced to sketch my profile, and include me in his forthcoming series of illustrious roués. But this would be offering a premium to the dog-stealers; who already enjoy (including the especial favour of the magistrates,) too many advantages and immunities; and, after the exhaustion of my first edition, I should never feel myself my own dog again, but live in perpetual fear, (like the last new pun at White's,) of being appropriated to the wrong owner.

I appeal, therefore, to your imagination to conceive me as Landseer only could have portrayed

me,—a canine gem of the first diminitude,—of tortoiseshell-complexion, and kitten-like feature;—my face, like an egotist, all eyes;—my head, like the auditors of Macaulay, all ears;—my tail, like those of Ainsworth, black and flourishing;—my silken, wavy coat, like a fragment of the sable boa of some beauteous marchioness, vivified by the Promethean torch.

Such is the most approved style of auto-biographical descriptions when a novelist portrays himself under the traits of his hero,—whether Sidonia or Godolphin. But I may as well bring the matter, Joseph Humeishly, within scope of the meanest capacity, by saying that twenty guineas have been given, as recovery money to the dog-stealers, for much worse dogs.

I have already alluded to my ancestors; and the same carping blockhead whom I saw on the watch to arraign my authorship, was also pleased to curl the lip at my vaunts; the critical race being, as all the literary world can testify, not only of the earth, earthy,—but of the mud, muddy. In utter defiance, however, of such sneers,—in defiance of all the heraldic colleges of united Europe,—I not

only re-assert my nobility of descent, but appeal to all the great houses extant in the civilized world, whether, in the palmiest state of their ascendancy, one of my progenitors were not the influential favourite of their princely household?

Ask the Talleyrands, for instance, whose names as Princes of Périgord are affixed to charters granted by Charlemagne, whether the princesses of *their* race considered their rush-strewn bower-chambers endurable, unless some puppy of my own had its privileged corner? At the period when the forefathers of the upstart families which in England (the *last* civilized of European countries) presume to call themselves "great," were dieted upon acorns and whortle-berries, and clad in wolf-skins as unlike as possible to the pardessus of the Baffin's Bay Company, the forefathers of mine were capering nimbly in a lady's chamber in imperial Rome; for history affirms that the Empress Faustina never appeared at any public solemnity, without one of my species nestling in her bosom!

It was in the person of that distinguished favourite, by the way, that our family made its first

settlement in the western world As the Emperor Probus brought the vine from the East for the endowment of Europe, the Emperor Antoninus brought puppy dogs. The beautiful little animal for which Faustina was indebted to his conjugal affection, was purchased by him at Smyrna (when entertained there by the Sophists) of a Georgian Calander, recently arrived from the Caucasus; by whom a pedigree inscribed on parchment in the Arabic character, was delivered to the Emperor; distinctly proving the beautiful little animal to be descended from the dog renowned in Arabian story, as having been conveyed by a certain prince, rolled within a hundred yards of cambric, in a grain of millet; a genealogy doubtless as authentic as many of those made out by D'Hozier, Chérin, or Sir Isaac Heard, and now flourishing in the pages of Burke.

It is, however, cogently suspected that the puppy and pedigree purchased by the Emperor Antoninus, belonged only to a junior branch of the issue of the enchanted dog. For, as there are two branches of the Ashburnhams who exhibit the self same shirt and watch bestowed by Charles

Stuart upon their ancestor on the scaffold; and two branches of the Wentworths in possession of Van Dyck's original picture of Strafford and his secretary, at Venice was for many centuries exhibited the self-same supernatural parchment or talisman, which had accompanied from the East a little dog belonging to one of the tribes of the *Veneti*, when they settled there under Antenor, shortly after the Trojan war; and I have always been taught to regard the lucky dog to whom this well-authenticated document was appended, as the real founder of our European race.

If the house of Hapsburg, or the house of Braganza, or the house of Bourbon, or the house of Montmorency, or the house of Moses and Sons, have anything grander to bring forward in support of their antiquity of descent, let them now declare it, or for ever after hold their peace. I *could* say something, in fact, about an event that occurred in my race prior to the deluge; but family pride has become of late so decidedly plebeian, that I forbear.

The first public monument of interest to which I can point in attestation of my pretensions, is an



effigy on a Byzantine monument in the church of St. Mark at Venice, said to represent a doge of the Barbarigo family, in the tenth century, the feet whereof rest upon a small dog wrought in coloured jasper; to which, in my brighter youth, I was supposed to bear so strong a family resemblance, that when I accompanied the young Duchess of Normanford to Venice, in the course of her Italian tour, it required all the influence of her aristocratic dignity, and still more of her English gold, to convince the superstitious populace she was not a witch, and had not stolen the *canineccio* from the doge's monument. Like the vassals in the Castle of Otranto, who asserted the gigantic helmet and sword to have been pillaged from Alphonso's tomb, the brutes chose to mistake my graceful, animated, brilliant, symmetrical form, for the formal figure of "my grandsire cut in alabaster !—".

The family *statuette*, however, is there to this day, as Lady Morgan, or Lady Chatterton, or the Ladies Cadogan, or Lady—any body else, who refreshes the public mind with reminiscences of Italy, will be proud to attest; and hundreds of

you, dear readers, hundreds and thousands who have never crossed the Po, or trifled with ink or water-colours, must have noticed in some of the fine portraits by Titian scattered through "this favoured isle," certain delicious little jet-black creatures resting on an ivory arm; at first sight mistaken for a flea, but on a more careful investigation seen to be favourite dogs, of the kind to which the vulgar parlance of England assigns the name of King Charles.

On the shores of the Adriatic, indeed, the dogs whose types are thus immortalized, retain the name of Tizianeschi; whereas, in the other Italian states, they are known by the name of dogs of the Venetian school.

From Venice to Whitehall, as from the sublime to the ridiculous, is but a step, especially when the step is taken by kings. My family were of too noble a race to travel by the beaten track. The high road is for the mail-coach and the bagman. — *Ours* was a special train!

When Mary of Medicis, the daughter of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, arrived at the Louvre as the legitimate bride of the royal lover of the

Belle Gabrielle, she brought with her, in addition to her right royal dowry, ladies of the bed-chamber, physician, confessor, and dwarf, (the usual living lumber of an affianced princess,) a creature for which the lovely countesses of the court of France, mistaking it from its black plumage and aërial movements for a favourite bird, hastened to provide a cage; nor was it till its gambols on the train of cloth of silver of its royal lady betrayed it to be a quadruped, that the whole court burst into an ecstatic chorus of "*Ah dieu ! —l'amour de chien !*"

The race translated from the East by a Roman emperor, had, in short, traversed Europe in the arms of a queen of France: and if the first princess of the house of Medicis admitted to rule over the French, brought poisoners and astrologers in her train, the last, as if in attestation of the progress of human enlightenment, contented herself with bringing a puppy!

Connected by descent through successive ages with the highest triumphs of the fine arts, this Titianesque treasure of the Medicean princess became an object of supreme favour with Sir Peter

Paul Rubens, when employed to immortalize by his glowing pencil the chief incidents in the life of the mother of Louis XIII.; and on reference to the innumerable copies of the Luxembourg Gallery extant in England, the portraits of the pet of pets will be seen,—now, seated in grave contemplation on the steps of the altar where the nuptial benediction is bestowing on its liege lady;—now, sporting with the little Moorish page, its rival in her favour. If I might presume to give advice to Edwin Landseer, to whom our species is so largely indebted, I would recommend him, indeed, when next he has to paint a royal puppy, to study the courtly and ineffable air of my great ancestor, while holding his own at the feet of Henri IV.

Everybody knows the story of Mary de Medicis: how, after bullying her royal husband, she attempted to bully her royal son; and how her unworthy favourites were beheaded, and her troublesome self banished the kingdom; the summary mode of dealing with refractory queens in a land where the barbarism of the Salique law is still ascendant; and where they hold to the Roman statute, expounded in the first of the sixth of

Aulus Gellius, that “the Cæsar of the empire is exempted from the operation of the laws, but not the Augusta.”

Among the *unworthy* favourites of Mary, I include not, of course, the treasure painted by Rubens ! Those who demanded the head of Marshal d’Ancre, left that of the lapdog on his shoulders. Voltaire has savagely defined Great Britain as “a country where they cut off the heads of their kings and tails of their horses.” But the French, to their honour be it spoken, touched not so much as a hair of that of Mignon !

I will not enlarge upon the woes of the exiled queen. Since the days of the great Sir Walter, the case of distressed royalty has gone rather out of fashion. People have begun to discover that sovereigns are seldom banished, unless for what in a lower walk of life would cause them to be transported. Suffice it that, according to the proverb of “*qui se ressemble, s’assemble*,” the banished queen of France and exiled king of England met at Cologne :—why, it is difficult to say, unless they went there to take *les eaux*.

Charles II. was little more than a boy,—Mary

de Medicis little less than an old woman. But extremes meet, as well as distressed sovereigns; and all that the rival of the fair Gabrielle had to bestow upon the future patron of Nell Gwynne, was a great deal of good advice,—and a little dog!

From this offspring of Mignon, brought by Mary from Tuscany and Antenor from Georgia, sprang that well-known family on which King Charles bestowed his name, (though he gave it not to the Fitzroys or Beauclerks;) and be it observed, that my great ancestor Bijou, the sire of all the royal favourites, had quite as good a right as the Earl of Surrey to commence his sonnet—

From Toscane came my lady's honoured race!

I have been a great bore in reciting these ancestral distinctions. Most people are, when they prose about the antiquity of their family. Still, as it was my fate to see the light under circumstances the most ignominious, I may perhaps be pardoned for bespeaking for myself a mite of reverence, by reminding my readers that, whatever other great houses may be in decadence,—the

Percys extinct,—the Bourbons outlawed,—the Wasas dethroned,—the progeny of King Christophe in Horsemonger Lane,—the scattered scions of *my* illustrious house are at this moment supreme throughout the royal boudoirs of the civilized world. Windsor Castle,—the Pavillon Marsan,—the Necessidades, — the Escorial, — Charlottenburg, — Tzarsko-Tzelo,—Caserta, — Schönbrunn,—*which* of them has not its velvet cushion lying at the feet of royalty, for the sole and express enjoyment of some descendant of the famous lap-dog of King Charles?—

Had I any thoughts of standing for Marylebone, now would be my time for laying hold of you, dear public, by the button, in order to prove (and *cum res occupavere, verba ambiunt*) the supreme ascendancy of the British empire over all empires that ever were, or are ever likely to be, including Australia or Polynesia, from the fact that, though brought into Europe by a Roman emperor, and naturalized in Christendom by an Italian princess, these matchless dogs (*mon auguste famille*) have become immortalized under the name of an English king; though at the mo-

ment he adopted them into favour, he had neither a shirt to his back nor a shoe to his foot; the reason, perhaps, why every one took the length of it.

The Chevalier de Grammont asserts, indeed, in an inedited chapter of his memoirs, that poor Bijou was twice left in pawn at Cologne, for a royal reckoning at a tavern; and once played away at shovel-board with a fair-shouldered burgomaster's lady. But these anecdotes, like half of those related by Grammont, were probably the coinage of his idle brain; for when he found he could make *nothing* of the English, that gallant Chevalier, who so wittily wrote himself down a *chevalier d'industrie*, made fun of them!

The Lord be praised, I have done with my lordly ancestors! And whatever you may think of it, good reader, like Charles Surface, I have sold them to you a bargain. Volumes might have been spun out of their history as connected with the middle ages. But finding that nobody reads Hallam, and that remote periods of history have ceased to interest our superficial age unless got up by Macready, or put upon the stage by



Planché,—I leave the sacred dust of my ancestors to the Archæological Society, or the dust-contractors of the British Museum, Bodleian, and Bibliothèque Royale; whose business it is to rake up all such dust as, like ghosts, had much better be laid.

And now, dear public, for myself! Prepare for a mighty fall,—prepare for a prodigious rise;—for as it was my fate to see the light among thieves and beggars, it was of course also my fate to see it in a sky-parlour. If you wish to rise with your subject it must be to an attic; for at the commencement I was no less than five stories high;

And for a little animal so rare,  
The wonder's how the devil I got there!

Alas! it was my natal place!—But my illustrious mother, fastidious reader, had reached it in the hands of a dog-stealer.

It happened that on the day she was torn from an adoring mistress, a prize of equal magnitude *also* fell among thieves. On the wretched rug before the almost fireless grate upon which she was

flung out of the inner pocket of a cabman's jacket, lay one of her own species, aristocratic as herself,—the Lovelace of the Tizianesco race,—“almost afraid to know itself,” as its delicate and golden-tinted paws, accustomed only to Persian carpets or footcloths of velvet, extended themselves loathingly on the napless mat. In this *mangeur de cœurs*, my mother instantly recognised the pampered darling of the Duchess of Wigmore, whom she had admired hundreds of times, paraded in her grace's pompous equipage in the park; while she,—it went to her heart to remember it, on observing his ineffable glance of inquiry as she assumed a place by his side,)—*she* was only a dog of equivocal gentility,—the pet of Mélanie the *danseuse*!

“Misery makes (dogs, like) men acquainted with strange bedfellows;” and the blind shufflings of fortune thus brought about an acquaintance between two distant relations who, in their diverse spheres of society, had otherwise remained strangers. It is true that the duchess and the danseuse were both indebted to the same prodigal hand for their lost favourites. The duke, a gouty

Rochester of the highest fashion, was the donor of both ; and though the duchess had advertised but five guineas reward for Fido, while the walls of the metropolis were covered with handbills offering fifteen for the recovery of my beloved mother, the same banker and purse were to supply the ransom of both.

It is possible that this interesting fact may have been known to the wretches guilty of abstracting the two darlings ; for during the first four-and-twenty hours it remained in dispute which should be the first restored to its agonized mistress,—that is to say, *where* the money was surest to be forthcoming, and *where* fewest questions would be asked. The duchess was the more likely of the two to secure the protection of the police and magistracy, which rendered it safer to deal with the *danseuse* ; the pin-money of Mademoiselle Mélanie being moreover a better security than that of her grace, on which the claims of the whist-table were even more peremptory than those of the toilet. It was soon settled, therefore, that my mother should be the first hostage tendered for redemption ; and that in the course of a few days, so as to

evade the charge of professional dog-stealing on the part of the cabman, the haughty Fido should be re-translated to his velvet cushion at Wigmore House.

The intentions of Bill Sims and his wife, under whose roof of bare rafters these stolen jewels were as inharmoniously lodged as “the most amorous poet, honest Ovid, among the Goths”—were frustrated by circumstances over which I would fain pass lightly; leaving it to such autobiographers as “Pelham” and “Cecil” to allude with the levity of wit to ancestral frailty.

Love at first sight, indeed, is a thing exploded among novelists; but memoirs truthful as mine require me to declare that a passion had sprung up between my captive parents as instantaneous as between Martin Luther and the fat nun of Wittenburg! In a word, the produce of their clandestine marriage presented so promising a source of speculation, that it was not till after a week’s anguish the duchess was enabled to shed tears, such as tender duchesses shed, over the silken ears of her restored favourite.

My poor mother was reserved for a harder fate,

with the view of placing her valuable progeny at the disposal of the dog-stealers. Some months hence, it would still be time enough to claim the fifteen guineas reward of Mademoiselle Mélanie ; for, however mercurial in their prepossessions, even opera-dancers do not change their favourites above once a quarter.

Needless to enlarge on the deplorable condition of my poor mother, when the partner of her transitory union was removed from her affections. The garret, which, so long as Fido was her companion, had seemed a palace, now became indeed a garret ; and the straw and dry bread which, when shared with *him*, were eiderdown and ambrosia, proved simply dry bread and straw.

By dry bread and straw, a creature accustomed to the luxuries of life is very soon reduced to skin and bone ; and at the close of a few weeks, had poor Mimi been placed under the eyes of her attached mistress between the pauses of her entrechats and pirouettes, she would have disowned her darling. Starvation, however, seemed to agree with her ; for tradition affirms that she was twice as animated in look and gesture under the severe

regimen of the Sims penitentiary, as when crammed, four times a day by the tender-hearted Mélanie, with chicken-panada.

As the moment approached when her expected offspring were to see the light, it was doubtless trying to her high-bred feelings to know that, instead of purple and fine linen, they would be wrapt in rags; or flung, perhaps, like herself, upon a heap of shavings. But, with the sustaining consciousness of gentle blood, she felt that such merits as hers and theirs *must* rise to their level; and that, sooner or later, these august puppies would be restored to the velvet cushions of their ancestors.

This reflection comforted her under her sufferings; and I am convinced that the maternal tenderness with which I found her licking my face, when first I woke to a consciousness of the things of this world, was unembittered by a painful emotion. All the mother was stirring in her heart!—She was as proud of me as I deserved!

I say of *me*, because the brother destined by nature to share her parental affection, was from

the first an object of secondary consideration. In *your* species, gentle reader, the larger the infant, the prouder the mother and nurse : in mine, the smaller the puppy, the happier the owner. My dimensions, accordingly, were such as instantly recommended me to the worship of Bill Sims and his spouse, and the favour of *my* nurse ; for a full-grown mouse would have cast a broader shadow !

Of concomitant beauty were my features and complexion. Frizzled and flat-nosed as Oronookoo, my skin, like his, was black as Erebus. Whereas the nose of my brother was pointed as my own wit ; and, as regards the credit of the race of King Charles, I need scarcely remind the world that where the dog's nose is long, his commons are short, — perhaps because the King Charleses were apt to be short with their Commons.

In a word, it was generally admitted that I united in my single person the beauty and the beast !

## CHAPTER II.

*Odora canum vis.*

Knowing dogs.

VIRGIL.

“ THERE !—creep into the straw with the pup in your arms, and take care and keep it snug and warm all night, if you mean to find yourself with whole bones in your skin to-morrow morning !” was the humane apostrophe of Bill Sims to his boy Jem, on placing me under his charge one chilly November night, after having already deposited my brother in that of his wife.

For in the second month of our age we were already orphans—not by the stroke of destiny, but the will of Sims !—The tender mother, by whom we had been nourished and cherished, was sold into slavery !—



The first moment it became possible without canino-cide to sever us from the author of our days, had been eagerly seized by the cab-driver to realize the wages of his crime. Yet strange to tell, it only then first occurred to him that opera-dancers are as migratory as swallows; and on looking around him, behold the Opera-house was closed, and the Haymarket knew nothing further of Mademoiselle Mélanie.—No more chance *now* of obtaining her fifteen guineas reward, than of earning such a sum in an honest way. By this time, she was at Paris,—Naples,—Madrid,—St. Petersburg;—adored by another duke, and adoring another lap-dog;—or perhaps at New York or Washington, receiving the thanks of Congress and the lumpish bouquets of the Broadway,—the bouquets of the Yankees, like their jests, being broader than they are long.

No matter!—The market was open!—It was only to watch the advertisements of reward for “a small black and tan spaniel, supposed to be stolen or strayed;” and convey my mother to the spot.—Not with the view of causing her matchless beauties to be confounded with those of any less

gifted dog.—But Sims, shrewd in his vocation, justly surmised that whoever was dog-fancier enough to cherish other spaniels and offer a high premium for their restoration, could not fail to be captivated by the superior length of ear, curtness of nose, and silkiness of coat, displayed by the little beauty over whom he had feloniously obtained the rights of proprietorship.

Twice, therefore, was my trembling parent torn from her straw and puppies, as for a last adieu; and twice, by the blessing of human stinginess, restored in the course of an hour or two to our embraces. Those before whom she had been paraded, affected steadfastness in their affection for their lost favourites;—though it is but justice to them to state that maternal tenderness had instigated to her sagacity when exhibited for sale, to make the least of her personal advantages, and the most of her teeth.—It might be, therefore, that the purchasers did not *bite*, because the dog *did*!

But this could not last for ever.—On the third trial, a pretty, capricious, fanciful bride, of the highest fashion, was persuaded by the adoring bridegroom who had married her for love at first

sight (of her Wiltshire estates,) that the Mimi with a white star on her chest offered by Sims, was no other than the Myrtle which was black as if carved in jet; which, though supposed to be lost in the Park, had been privately hung by her maid and lay buried in the garden.—And Sims accordingly mounted up by three steps at a time to his garret, on his return home; from having no dog in his arms, but in its place, a tune between his lips, and twenty golden guineas rattling in his pocket!

Such was the cause of his humane solicitude about keeping the desolate orphans warm that bitter night!—Two pups of such a breed would eventually render the twenty, forty.—At no distant date, the price of my poor mother might be multiplied by two.

Never shall I forget the agony of feeling with which I heard him recount to his family the details of the bargain which was to divide me for ever from a mother as fond as Madame de Sévigné. In every sense of the word, the fellow was in the highest spirits;—for “something to drink” had of course been conceded to one who represented himself, and with truth, as NOT the owner of the dog;

and with less veracity, as the agent commissioned for the sale.

“Luck never comes alone, Bet!”—said he to his ragged helpmate.—“A’ter being out of work these four months, cos work might have kept us all a trifle further off starvation,—here, just from having these shiners in my pocket, (which will pay up all we owe in the world and leave us a couple o’ months keep, *not* in clover may be, but in as good as we’ve known these ten year,)—I happened to step in to the Swan on my way home, to take the fog out o’ my throat after so long a walk from the West End; and *who* should I light on but my old master of Coram Mews, who *said* (tho’ I don’t believe him) he’d been long a looking out for me. For he’s out o’ men, it seems.—No. 1134 has got into trouble, about a smash in the city, and is in for ten days at the mill. No. 947 is laid up with the rheumatiz; and the wife of No. 744 is bad with a fever, and he’s forced to stay at home and mind the children.—I might have made mouths, as great folks do when they’re offered a government place, and stood out for wages, to pay him off for the way he sent me packing when times was hard-

est with me.—But I didn't!—One hasn't the heart to be onpleasant with such a lot of money in one's pocket!—So I agreed with him for a couple o' months on the nail; and on my way home took my old frieze out o' pop; and this very night begin my job.—So here's the money, old woman; and keep it like the apple o' your eye—(the tea-pot on the top shelf o' the cupboard's the safest place!) And keep the pups, too, almost as precious!—For unless I'm plaguily mistaken, they'll be worth as much more to us, afore Midsummer's come and gone.”—

Such was the motive of his charge to little Jem in my favour; when, having donned the double-caped frieze and clapped an old oilskin hat upon his head, the gentleman who had so magnanimously accepted office at the first offer, was about to tie round his throat a ragged woollen shawl of his wife's by way of comforter, to enable him to brave the fog and frost of a London November, from ten at night till ten in the morning as driver of the hack-cab 947!

*I* had no cause to revile him.—On quitting his *lares* and *penates*, his last thought was for “the

pups.”—His parting caress to Jem, was a kick,—his farewell word to his wife, a curse.—She had earned it however. For after his proof of conjugal confidence in entrusting his whole treasure to her hands, it was certainly galling to be admonished against returning to the Swan, on his way to the Mews, for a second antidote against the night-fog ; especially as she was herself no disciple of Father Mathew.

It is a common mode of chamber-practice in this hardest-hearted of worlds, for an individual receiving an injury to avenge it on the head, *not* of the aggressor, but of the weakest person at hand:—No sooner had the cab-man grumbled his way down the creaking stairs, than Mrs. Sims repaid herself for his ill-usage by bestowing a hearty cuff on poor Jem, as she enjoined him to do as he was bid, and not stand dawdling there ;—opening at the same moment the door of a dark closet, half filled with straw which served him for a bed ; justly surmising that he was “ dawdling there ” with the faint hope of a crust for supper, on a night of such unequalled family prosperity.

No crust, however, was forthcoming ; though the

hungry child had previously undergone the torment of seeing a dainty mess of bread and milk gently simmered over the cinder-fire smouldering in a corner of the rusty grate, for the behoof of myself and my brother; and by the manner in which he pulled to the closet-door after him, I foresaw that I was to pay the penalty of the cuff, as well as of the cold and hunger with which his teeth were chattering.

Strange that cold and hunger should retain so much effect upon his wretched little frame; since at least six years out of his ten, had been spent in their endurance. It was only in summer, he knew what it was to be warm. But there was *no* season of the year, even when the fruits of the earth were most abundant, in which poor Jem ceased to be hungry!

Such was the cause of the stunting of the child's growth,—of his emaciation, and querulous feebleness of voice!—His features were pinched,—his eyes hollow,—his wan cheeks tight-drawn over the projecting bones.—I was mistaken, however, in my anticipations of a cuff.—He had not strength to be angry. The tears that burst from his eyes

when he flung himself, rags and all, headlong into the straw, were tears of weakness.

In the joy of my agreeable disappointment, I ventured gently to lick the hand which, in the midst of his troubles, in obedience to his father's savage orders, still held me close to his little swelling, struggling bosom.—At first, he was too much absorbed in his misery, to take heed of my caresses. At length, their warmth imparted a pleasant sensation,—(and rare were pleasant sensations to that poor little fellow!)—and when he found it was a token of kindness from the little animal he had been envying, — the little animal which in his heart he had cursed and cursed again,—he began to cry more bitterly than ever;—partly because he was ashamed of himself; partly because almost in hopes he had found a friend!

“After all, it is not the fault of dogs that there are folks who value them more than Christians!” sobbed he,—as he gently stroked my silken poll.—“If father and mother set more store by the pup than by their own flesh and blood, ’tisn’t to be wondered at!—Who’d give twenty guineas for e’er a one of us, I should like to know?—Who’d



bid ten pounds for *me*,—or five,—or two,—or even a five shilling piece?—Yet they have to clothe and feed me, as if I was worth as much as my neighbours;—though such a poor and rickety creature, that even the chimney-sweeper at the corner wouldn't hear of me for a 'prentice,—and *that* was the only trade, I thought, for which I wasn't too little!"

And then, amid his sobs, came still more heart-breaking recollections;—how, when his elder brothers were apprenticed,—(one, in better times, by his parents,—one, in their adversity, by the parish,)—he had hoped to obtain in his turn the means of gaining a livelihood;—till, puny and sickly, he found that he was good for nothing in this world,—that is, good for nothing but to beg,—a vocation in which his agueish looks and chattering teeth became qualifications of the first order. But it was hard, with every good intent to work, to have been born only to beg!—And even as a beggar, and successful in his calling, he was exposed to the oppressions of beggars stronger than himself; and of the law, that was stronger than them all.

Such was the companion of my first miserable night of separation from my loving mother!—and though, amid his moans and murmurs, I heard poor Jem repeatedly express a desire to be in my skin, for the sake of the bread and milk already lavished on me and the velvet cushion of my future destinies, I certainly did not reciprocate the wish by any desire to be in *his*;—albeit, for some hours past, I had been whining piteously after my mother, while Jem Sims was in the undisturbed enjoyment of both his parents.—Previous observation led me to surmise, with truth, that Mrs. Sims had locked him up so abruptly in the dark closet, only that she might enjoy those nightly potations which, like herself, were anything but *thin*; and judging between my mother and Jem's, *she* was decidedly the brute!

From that moment a tacit compact and friendship was struck up betwixt us,—the union of the weak against the strong.—By uniting my small forces with his, I gave him considerable importance in the family. I would eat only from the hand of Jem; and when Mrs. Sims, attracted by my charms of form and complexion, proposed ex-

changing me for my brother, (who had been assigned to her charge by her husband as requiring more cautious tending,) I took care to keep her awake all night by such piteous cries, that I was soon restored to the dark closet and the arms of my Pythias.—My endearments had already won his affections.—Poor Jem was all the happier for my companionship; and we soon came to love each other dearly,—like two miserable little dogs as we were!

It must surely have been the instincts of my high-bred nature which apprised me, in the miserable den comprehending my present knowledge of life and manners, of the existence of a brighter world elsewhere. For, in spite of those cobwebbed rafters, those smoke-dried walls, that stained and worm-eaten floor,—in spite of the continual spectacle of dirt and want and wretchedness, I continued as sportive and sanguine as became a puppy of my weeks. The sun that shone so brightly into that miserable attic, (whenever the window was open, so that its clouded and cracked panes, here and there mended with patches of brown paper, interposed no obstacle

between us and the light of day,) could not methought have been framed to waste its radiance upon objects so unsightly as three-legged chairs with rushless bottoms, or the truckle-bed of Sims and his wife, to which I so greatly preferred the straw in my closet. A species of *clairvoyance* insinuated into my soul visions of flowery meadows,—of gay parterres,—or carpets of Aubusson or Axminster, whose brilliant tissues emulated both;—objects familiar to my progenitors, and doubtless communicating themselves by inheritance like innate ideas to my brain. Like Henri V. at Grätz, I felt convinced that better things and happier hours awaited me;—a presentiment so cheering, that my incessant gambols ended by communicating a livelier spirit to the poor little half-starved urchin who seemed chiefly important to his parents in his capacity of dry-nurse to myself.

It was probably in consequence of this hilarity of nature, that Mr. and Mrs. Sims, who of course officiated as my sponsors, saw fit to name me RATTLE!—By the former, I had often the honour to be sworn at, for rousing him from his slumbers

after a severe night's work, by running about like Cerito after my shadow in the sunshine. Unschooled in the malpractices of society, it appeared to *me* that night was the time for sleep, and day for play: nor could I understand why my sports provoked the anger of the cabman. Had poor Jem been the offender, he would have received a kick instead of a curse. But *I* was worth ten pounds; and with the tenderness of some figurante's venal spouse, he esteemed it an act of profligate extravagance to risk the injurious consequences of an assault.

Had he done so, however, (and the brutality of a gin-drinker is not always amenable even to the powerful voice of interest,) I verily believe my poor little protector would have hazarded some unfilial outrage in my defence. For he loved me better than kith or kin; and in return, was far dearer to me than my natural, or rather *unnatural* brother; who never saw me without a snarl,—either from envy of my superior beauty, or from having sympathetically imbibed the quarrelsome humour of Mrs. Sims, of whom he was the day and night companion.

For the temper of that angelic creature did not

improve on acquaintance.—As the twenty golden guineas melted away, her heart hardened;—perhaps, from foreseeing that the hunger and cold which she took care should be habitual to little Jem, were likely to devolve on herself; perhaps because they had been fused into the form of cream of the valley,—a potation seldom productive of the milk of human kindness.

The cabman, too, grew more and more savage, as the pursuance of his calling in all weathers at all hours of the night, favoured the repetition of his visits to the Swan.—Or rather, *all* his houses of call were swans!—Not an alehouse within the bills of mortality but became the haunt of Bill Sims; and our poor garret was the sufferer!—Poor Jem, indeed, was kept as scant of food as Petruchio's Katherine; and I almost began to apprehend he might some day be tempted to put in practice a frequent threat of his tenderer moments,—that he would eat me up!

At last, one genial night in May, when the balmy sweetness of the weather attained even our wretched home, so as to inspire a thousand vague but pleasant anticipations, I was startled from my light sleep by sobs on the part of my companion,

quite as woe-stricken as those which had marked my first night of separation from the mother whose fondness his care so fully replaced.

Jem was not apt to cry. I had seen him endure, without wincing, kicks and cuffs that would have broke the heart or back of many a stronger boy; and the privation of a meal at the end of a long day's fasting, with a degree of stoicism, which since I became better versed in the capabilities of human appetite, by sitting at good men's feasts, has excited my retrospective admiration.

But now,—he cried, “sans intermission, an hour by my dial;” which continuous shower having cooled the atmosphere of his grief, he began to find solace in incoherent ejaculations.

“Yes, my poor Rattle,” faltered he, “you must go!—We must part.—You are to be sold like the rest of 'em,—and poor Jem will be left all alone!—Nothing to divert him, when he is hungry,—nobody to lick his poor bruises, when he is threshed; and father's lickings, Rattle, are very different from *yours*!—Happy fellow!—There are plenty of folks that will buy *you*.—*You* will never want for victuals or kindness.—*You* will lead a

soft life, and die an easy death,—fondled by every body!—While I, so long as I’ve lived, I can’t call to mind that any human creature ever addressed me a kindly word!—I’ve often thought I should like to rid father and mother of me by drowning myself,—for they’re always telling me I’m a plague and curse to ’em, and that they won’t work to keep *me* in idleness,—though *who* would work so hard as I, if I was able?—But if I *was* to drown myself, I should be sold to the dissecting house, like Bob Hodding’s child;—and that thought makes my flesh creep.—Ah! my dear loving little Rattle—if I was only a dog!—or if at least I was likely to keep you here a little longer, my kind, kind playmate, so as to make me put up with being a Christian!”—

It will be readily believed that my caresses did their utmost to comfort him. But the following day his communication received fatal confirmation. For I could not bear to leave my fellow-sufferer alone to his misfortunes; and the tone in which Bill Sims observed, on flinging off his coat and oil-skin hat, that “now he’d lost his situation,”—(he did not choose to say) “now that the Swan



had lost him his situation,") "he wasn't going to keep a parcel o' lapdogs to eat him out of house and home."

It did not occur to me that the lapdogs had been kept by their own will, or for their own pleasure; though it *did* that to be ejected from such a home as his, by eating, or any other mode of riddance, must be a great advantage. Shortly afterwards, I found myself the object of two processes which, during my sojourn in the garret, I had seldom seen undergone by any other of its inmates,—washing and combing;—when a strong lather brought out so charmingly the tints and tone of my glossy coat, that Bill Sims, to whom they were so interesting a matter of speculation, forgot his ill-humour for a time.

"Keep your own little, snarling, snappish brute as long as you will, Bet!" said he, when he took me out of poor Jem's arms, as mammas forgive their crying children when company is expected, lest his tears should impair the lustre of my curls;—"if I don't make a job of *this'n*, it will be always time to hang t'other, or sell him for half-a-crown."

This insult purported to be “aggravating;” for my brother, though no beauty, (albeit as troublesome and conceited as one,) was a dog such as in Bloomsbury, or any other of the remoter outskirts of civilization, would have been hailed with rapture. He was the very animal for a basket lined with green baize, beside the parlour fire of some old maid of St. Pancras;—so that to talk of hanging was preposterous.

Shall I ever forget my sensations on being extricated from the fusty pocket of Bill Sim’s ragged coat, to be led by a cord fastened to the dirty leathern strap constituting my collar, along the walk skirting the Serpentine, on a day, and at an hour, when Hyde Park was at its fullest!—The blood of my ancestors curdled within my veins at the ignominy!—For the first time, I beheld rich equipages, with prancing horses, emblazoned harness, silken cushions, and the fair angels presiding therein for whose laps I was evidently intended by nature.—I felt those gay carriages and lovely ladies to be my own; yet behold, there I was,—led by a knotted packthread, in the hands of a dog-stealer!—

If anything could have consoled me for my bitter sense of mortification, it would have been the wistful looks cast at me by those fair creatures as they passed. Not one of them but seemed as fully aware that she belonged to *me*, as I that I belonged to *her*!—What smiles brightened their beaming faces, while pointing me out to their companions as the marvel of my species, *canis minimus*,—*le chien comme il y en a peu*!

Judge, however, gentle public, of my emotions,—I say only judge of my emotions,—when one of the fairest of them, after uttering a faint cry of admiration, snatched into her lap from the opposite cushion of the open carriage in which she was seated, as if for comparison, a beautiful little creature of my own species, in which I recognized with a throbbing bosom, the fondest of mothers!—How,—*how* was I to attract her attention!—The carriage, alas! rolled on; while *I* remained tugging at my string till it nearly broke, and barking my little heart out.

In vain!—The cry of nature was unheard.—Two dirty urchins, such as follow in the parks the profession of holding gentlemen's horses, nearly

drove me to distraction, by mimicking my inefficient clamour ;—while Bill, who had reasons of his own for shirking the recognition of the servants accompanying the fatal carriage, dragged me back till I was nearly strangled; contriving to screen himself from observation behind the voluminous flounces of a couple of ladies passing by, whose dimensions might have sufficed to mask a battery.

Fain would I have sat down and wept.—But sedentary grief was not for a wretch like me!—“Doomed for a certain time to walk” the day, I was paraded up and down the dusty ring; and though numberless were the amateurs who, on discerning me, cast a longing, lingering look behind, the cut of Bill Sims was so manifestly that of the professional dog-stealer, that no one hazarded a bid.

I say no one; because though a showy animal mounted on a much finer animal than himself, had the audacity to stop his horse, and mutter something about a couple of guineas, I considered such an overture as insult added to injury. I have since discovered this over-dressed curmudgeon to be a wealthy banker.

For the credit of my character I blush to own that the delight experienced by poor Jem on seeing his father return home with a ferocious face, and myself, instead of a ten-pound note, in his pocket, was far from reciprocal!—Though the poor little fellow wept for joy over me, and was content to go supperless to bed, instead of enjoying the feast that would have been the result of a good bargain, *my* feelings on returning to the straw and dark closet, were the reverse of exulting.—I had scarcely the heart to requite his fondness, even by licking his dirty hand!—

Such is the result of contact with the vanities of the world! Three hours in Hyde Park, and already sophisticated!—After feasting my eyes on lily-white duchesses, how was I to abide the wrinkled face of Betsy Sims?—After the bright aspect of those well-cushioned chariots, how was I to endure the thrum mat?—Never shall I forget the sarcastic glances cast upon me by Dash, my ill-favoured brother, on seeing me dislodged from Sim's coat-pocket with drooping crest and tail between my legs, like a defeated candidate sneaking from the hustings, or a

country beauty on a Wednesday morning in King Street, on finding her application for a ticket for Almacks', dishonoured. At that moment he looked as proud of his old rug and his Betsy Sims, as though *she* had been a Cleopatra, or *he* a philosopher!

I could fill volumes with the history of the ensuing ten days;—the alternate terrors and rejoicings of poor Jem, as he saw me depart every morning, "*beau, brillant, leste, et volage,*" trusting never to return; and reappearing, every night, weary and draggled-tailed as a cabinet minister after a hundred hours' debate; upbraided by Bill and his wife as though *I* were the source of their poverty, instead of having simply failed to become a mine of wealth. But the ratiocination of dog-stealers is scarcely their strong point!

Let us pass, railroad-wise, over the negotiations of which I was the object. The struggle between meanness and inclination is seldom pleasant to dwell on;—whether as regards the negotiation of loans between the disnationed Jews and our national exchequer, or the Woods and Forests

treating for a royal villa,—or ladies of fashion bargaining for old lace or new lap-dogs. Suffice it, that the more I became acquainted with aristocratic life, the more convinced was I that all other spheres were insupportable. Sooner than remain the inmate of that wretched garret while there was a summer greensward to be sported on, or in winter, the boudoir of a duchess to afford an appropriate shelter to my refined nature, I determined to starve myself to death!—In Bill Sims's establishment, it would not have been very difficult.

## CHAPTER III.

Is not my fate  
 Black, starless, sunless? When warm airs come down  
 From heaven, what know I of the flowery times?  
 What of abundant harvest hours?—Nought—nought!  
 I'm cold—I'm *hard*!—The wolf that has no mate  
 And scarce a meal, and's forc'd to howl all night  
 His hunger to Siberian snows,—doth live  
 In a world too bleak for pity!

CORNWALL.

Ils me donnent des lois  
 Que je ne comprends pas, pourtant je dois les suivre;  
 Si je reçois le joug, ils me permettent de vivre,  
 Autrement, c'est la mort!

HUGO.

I WOULD fain avoid recurring to the Sims family in a spirit of bitterness; since, saving



for their iniquities, I had never seen the light of day, which no sentient entity prizes more dearly than myself. Moreover, they were *really* objects of commiseration; for Bill Sims, like Dogberry, was “one who had had losses.”

His father was a serf, or tenant, or what you will, *at will*, of one of the great vassals of the crown;—a noble Earl, who asserted his rights to do what he pleased with his own,—including in his notions of property the *feræ naturæ* fed upon his tenants’ grain, and the sons and daughters starved upon the refuse of his exactions; and alack! one hungry day, Bill was detected in the act of carrying home a fine hare from one of his father’s turnip fields—a crime for which he was sentenced by the rigour of a bench—of all benches the most wooden—to fine and imprisonment. It was before philanthropy came into fashion. At no great distance of years, it had been thought a wonderful act of humanity on the part of the great Howard, to attempt the extirpation of the gaol fever; nor had prison discipline yet exercised the eloquence of parliament, or the ingenuity of Quarterly Reviews.—

On emerging, therefore, from one of those academies for desperadoes, called county gaols, Bill returned home with all the worst instincts of his nature accomplished by the amplest instruction.

The noble Earl, his suzerain, was apparently prepared for such a result; for in the avowed conviction that young Sims's next exploit would be shooting one of his lordship's keepers instead of wiring one of his lordship's hares, the steward gave notice to his father to quit his farm at the end of his year, unless the refractory young man were despatched to get his living in "fresh fields and pastures new," where hares or gamekeepers were less precious to the landlord.

The ejection threatened ruin to the old man; and Bill, who, among the lessons of worthlessness learned in gaol, had not acquired a disregard for the gray hairs of his father, insisted upon being permitted to seek his fortune. Nineteen years, and health, and strength, were something towards it; and when old Sims made it an act of justice to bestow on him his legitimate fourth of the contents of an old leathern purse, containing the savings of the family, Bill

fancied himself so rich, that, unluckily, he was not content to seek his fortune *alone*.—The reason *he* assigned, however, for marrying in haste, to repent at leisure, a neighbour's daughter as poor as himself, (to whom he felt himself engaged, by the breaking of a shilling between them, somewhat more closely than the young lordships of the day (by their word of honour) to the fair objects of their flirtations,) was that Betsy was too pretty a girl to be left unprotected to the mercy of the great man endowed with such comprehensive notions of manorial rights.

By this untimely marriage, the young couple were ruined for life.—Want for one, became famine for two; and children came as fast to Bill and his wife, as gains slow.—In what are called respectable families, the announcement that he was a married man excluded him from all hope of service; and after being buffeted from one to another, like a cricket ball, he was thankful at last to obtain a cartership to a market-gardener in the neighbourhood of London;—an office in which his renown as a Jehu, soon obtained him promotion to the box of a Battersea coach.

The stage is admitted on all hands to be a sorry profession. A weather-worn life soon converted Bill Sims into a drunkard, from which the gradation is easy to a brawler and vagabond. Like a bill of the play, the Bill of the stage was soon not worth a penny !

A sottish coachman is as sure to get out of place as a high-minded politician. After a short career upon the road, Bill found himself on the *pavé*.—Coaching had proved as fatal to him as poaching,—and when the imprudent fellow saw two fine boys, his firstborn, carried off by typhus fever, (because the cellar they lived in was beneath the notice of the parish doctor,) and bitterer still, when he found his beautiful girl decoyed from a home where, under the influence of misery, she was starved, and threatened, and beaten,—he first began to assert over the pet dogs whose masters and mistresses were too inert to take care of them, the self-assumed rights he had exercised, so much to his cost, over the hares of the Right Honourable the Earl of Hardington.

He had scarcely thriven the better for it!—His wife, who had sunk, with the readiness of an un-

instructed nature, through the miserable gradations of victim, slattern, and scold, had, on the loss of her daughter, taken to the same source of consolation as Bill; and never had the wretched household been in worse plight than when, like a precious jewel, I lay concealed amid its *fumier*.

On re-considering, therefore, the ignominious period of my infancy, my amended experience of the world suggests excuses for the intemperate man who, in the outset of life, was driven from his father's threshold; and the wretched woman who, of her six children, had seen two sold like slaves in the market to the highest bidder,—two flung like dogs in a parish coffin into a parish grave, for want of timely remedies and wholesome nourishment,—a fifth condemned to an existence compared with which those coffins and that shallow grave were a glorious destiny;—and her daughter—but even *she* had not courage to think about her poor daughter!—

Still, though my retrospections are indulgent, it is not to be expected that a dog with such a pedigree as mine should enter minutely into the feelings of a slovenly, unhandsome wretch like Betsy

Sims; and I am free to confess that when, from my thrum-mat before the fire, during the absence of my little protector on his begging expeditions, I saw her mount upon a chair to reach the top shelf of the cupboard, where stood the teapot recommended by her husband as the safest depository of their treasure, and bring down a child's cap,—a poor faded, shabby thing, that the very pawnbroker would have rejected,—and sit and cry over it for hours, rocking herself to and fro in her rickety chair,—I always fancied she had been drinking.—

“ Poor Mary !—poor little Mary !” was all I gathered from her mutterings. And how was I to suppose she was thinking of her lost child ?—How was I to guess that one of her reasons for hating me was the notion that half the money a little beast like myself could command from the minions of luxury would have preserved her unfortunate girl from wretchedness in this world and condemnation in the next ?

But enough of the Simses ! Give me an ounce of civet, good Messrs. Bayley and Blew, to sweeten my imagination !—

“What will you take for him?” demanded a fair-faced, beardless individual, to whose saddle I was lifted by Bill one afternoon in a by-street in May Fair, through which we were making our usual way to the park, (when stopped by one who, from his attitude on horseback, I was bound to consider of the masculine gender, though the perfumes exuding from his clothes and hair, the cambric and satin displayed between the lappels of his coat, thrown widely apart, and the enamel studs and jewelled pins adorning both shirt and cravat, would otherwise have avouched him as being of the softer sex;—or as Bill Sims, seemed to think, of the *remarkably* soft.)

“Your lordship couldn’t think of offering a poor fellow less than thirty *suv’*reigns for such a screamer!”—said he, removing his dirty cap to exhibit a still dirtier head, in compliment to the nobility of his customer.—“I refused forty guineas for him, my lord, from the old Duchess of Lancashire last week. But as money’s scarce, and your lordship’s been a customer afore—”

“Thirty guineas for a mere *puppy*?” exclaimed the young lord;—to which I longed to retort that

there were other “mere puppies” in the world who estimated themselves at an equally exorbitant rate.

“A *puppy*!” retorted Bill, on the other hand, with well-acted indignation, that would have done credit to an opposition-badgered home-secretary,—“Vy you can’t have looked at this ’ere little beauty, my lord, to call him a *puppy*!—Two years old, come Haugust!—Had the distemper and everything!—Warrant him never to grow another hinch!—Only be pleased, my lord, to look at his teeth.”

Accepting a hint formerly afforded me on this subject by my mother, I took care that he should *not*;—and not caring to own, on my resisting his attempts to open my mouth, that he was afraid of a thing of my inches, or of dirtying his straw-coloured gloves, his lordship, like Bob Acres after his first fire, declared himself satisfied. My heart beat with the fond hope that he might be so; for I saw that he was the very woman for me!—Those perfumes—that fine linen—that drawling inanity of tone—would secure the happiness of my little life!



“ Bring him to the Athol, in Albemarle Street, to-morrow morning,” said he, giving a slight intimation to his horse to proceed, as he dropped me back into the extended hands of Bill Sims, “ and I’ll see about it.”

“ I’ll wait upon your lordship when your lordship goes home to dress, if your lordship pleases,” said Bill, officiously,—apparently afraid that to his feminine fastidiousness of dress his lordship might add the feminine quality of capriciousness. But his lordship replied by an oath, the coarseness of which was so completely mitigated by the silken lisp in which it was emitted, that, while he cantered gently off, I remained more than ever in doubt concerning the sex of the perplexing epicene.

How I longed for the morning; and how I rustled in my straw, lest, perchance, Jem should oversleep himself, and suffer his father to forget his appointment!

For my ignorance of the world, in the polite sense of the word, induced me to imagine that “ morning” implied that portion of the day preceding noon; whereas the experience of Bill Sims,

as cab-driver, dog-stealer, and scamp in general, made *him* perfectly aware that Lord Algernon's "morning" purported the space between one and four of the afternoon,—an interval he was in the habit of devoting to his toilet and breakfast,—his tradespeople and friends.

Just, therefore, as twelve was striking by St. George's church, we reached the West End. Yet, on applying at the Athol, a surly porter intimated that "my lord hadn't been a-bed till daylight, and was still asleep."

Among the lessons taught by poverty is patience; and Bill accordingly stationed himself near the door, till he saw a neat cabriolet drive up; out of which stepped a dapper little man, who, from his dress, and the paces of his fine horse, I should have mistaken for another lord, but that under his arm he held a square parcel, folded in a black silk wrapper.

"You can't say as how my lord's asleep *now* that you've just let in his tailor to him," said Bill, as the gentleman and his parcel insinuated themselves, eel-like, into the hall.

"Mr. Schniptz is come on business," replied

the man, with an indication of his thumb to Bill that *he* had better be off.

“And so ’m I come on business,” retorted Bill, after contriving to insert the solid width of his high-lowed foot between the door and door-post, as if determined to maintain his advantage,—“I’ve an appointment with my lord, and here’s my lord’s own card to prove it.”

Saying which, he produced from the pocket of his fustian jacket a square of slate-coloured paste-board, inscribed, in minute old English characters, with the name of “Lord Algernon Howarth,” which I had often noticed lying in the dust of his filthy chimney-piece, retained, probably, on occasion of some former bargain, and preserved for emergencies; wisely enough,—for, dirty as it was, the authority with which it was invested served to render the Cerberus as mild as a lamb. Bidding Bill Sims bide where he was, off he hobbled in pursuit of my lord’s own man, to decide upon our claims to admittance.

The “own man,” who answered to the name of Ernest, was a compound of his noble master and Schniptz, with a little touch of the dancing master,

who wore a guard-chain large enough for a Lord Mayor. His shirt collar was neatly turned down over a blue satin cravat; and altogether he looked like an ugly woman in a riding-habit, such as I had often noticed in the park.

The dialogue that ensued between the dog's master and my lord's own man was private and confidential. Ernest and my exemplary proprietor appeared to be confederates of old; for the language in which they conversed was so terse and peculiar, that it was Greek to *me*, whose notions of slang were at present as limited as Lord Algernon's of the dead languages. As far as I could understand, a price was set by the valet on an entrance into my lord's chamber, fully as preposterous as that set by Sims upon myself.—But though I understood them not, they understood each other; and when Ernest bad the worthy in whose pocket I was nestling “walk up stairs,” the porter, now civility itself, added only a polite request that he would wipe his shoes.

“Wait a moment, and I sall see what I sall do for you,” said Herr Ernest, when we reached a small ante-chamber on the first floor, leading to a

suite of rooms inhabited by Lord Algernon, in which stood a fat page in a green suit ridged over with buttons, like a common infested by moles, evidently waiting for an answer to a note; and two seedy-looking individuals of hang-dog aspect, waiting for an answer to a bill, which did not seem likely to be so immediate.

“Give de dog to me, and I sall take him in to my lord,” repeated the valet-de-chambre; and so reliant was the usually mistrustful Sims on the good faith cemented by mutual interest, that he did not hesitate to place me in the hands of his confederate.

Hastily traversing a room where a breakfast with two covers was laid out,—which, even to so *cursor*y a view, seemed to present to my inexperienced eyes a banquet for the gods,—we entered a chamber, on the threshold of which I was saluted with a gust of perfumes which I spontaneously recognized as the incense offered by Lord Algernon to the worship of his divine person.

The first object, however, that met my eyes was a more plainly dressed, though equally self-sufficient young man, not much past years of discre-

tion, who was lounging on the sofa with a newspaper in his hand, with far more the appearance of being master of all he surveyed, than Lord Algernon ; who was standing opposite a large swing-glass, under the authority of Schniptz, with very much the air of a girl dressing for a masquerade.

“*Do* put the paper down, like a good fellow, Roper, and tell me about these cursed plaits !” said his lordship, extending the slender limb encased in summer jean, which, with his cambric corazza *à petits plis* gave him so missish a look. “Schniptz has exaggerated them so confoundedly that they look more like a farthingale, than a pair of pantaloons.”

“Schniptz understands his business better than you or I. Reform your tailor’s bills, but don’t pretend to reform your tailor. And by the way, Algernon, pray reform your lingo ; and offend my ears no more with the word pantaloons !—What the English mean by talking about ‘a *pair*’ of pantaloons or ‘a *pair*’ of stays, has always exceeded my comprehension.”

“They mean to talk as their fathers and mo-

thers talked before them,”—replied his lordship, somewhat crabbedly.

“ Their fathers and mothers were also English, and also talked nonsense. If the French are reasonable enough to say ‘ *un corset*,’ ‘ *un pantalon*,’ why not *we* ?”

“ Because we don’t choose to borrow anything, much less our language, from the rascally French.”

“ In *this* instance we borrow it from the rascally Italians!—A pantaloon, my dear fellow, is a garment copied from the Bergomasques, who wore it when all the rest of Europe was breeched; and the Venetians being called *Pianta Leone* or Planters of the Lion, (from the standard of St. Mark,) the word became corrupted in their *patois* to *pantaleone*, a name assigned by the rest of Italy to one of their masks, (who still figures as the Pantaloon of our pantomime,) as well as to all nether garments which descend to the heel.”

“ Mishter Roper was soch a very grand shcolar !” muttered Ernest, with a sneer.

But I fancy *I* was the only person present who profited by his pedantry; for Schniptz and his lordship were eagerly at issue concerning the

width of a waistband: till Ernest, sick of waiting in the back-ground, having suddenly placed me on the carpet, up I gambolled to my lord, placing my black and well-feathered paws slightly upon his white jean, to throw them out by force of contrast, as Titian used to place a negress in attendance on his Venus in the bath.—

“By Jove, what a beauty!” cried Roper, now, at least, speaking to the purpose. “How long have you had it, Algy?”

“I have not got it at all,—at present,” rejoined his lordship,—surveying both himself and me in the swing-glass, rather than risk the cracking of his tight garments by an attempt to stoop.—“If I can deal with the man it belongs to, I mean to send it to Mrs. Vernon.”—

“Labour lost, —and money lost!” rejoined Roper, with a slight shrug of the shoulder.

“That is *my* affair!”—

“What does the fellow ask for it?”—

“Forty,—or something thereabouts.”—

“Positively, the price of a hack!”

“I wish *I* ever found a rideable hack at double the money!” retorted Lord Algernon.



“The man which brought him vas say your lordship sall promise give him five and twenty guineas down, in money, and somesing to drink?” interposed the valet-de-chambre, half interrogatively.—

“Did I?—I forget all about it!”—replied Lord Algernon—comforting himself by a deep gasp, as at that moment the tailor released him from the durance vile of the waistband.—“But I can’t manage it *now* for all that!—I was cleaned out last night at Crockford’s.—Ernest! what money did I bring home?”

“Von half sovereign, and some silver, my lord.”—

“And what did I take out?”—

“Three hundred and twenty in de note,—two poneys, and loose gold.”—

“A confounded run of luck!”—rejoined his lordship, who had now ensconced another pantaloons, and a loose brocaded dressing-gown, in which he looked more lady-like than ever.

“See what there is in my desk,” said he, again addressing the valet; while the tailor proceeded to jot down in his velvet note-book the items of *his* orders of the day.

“ A cheque for three hundred and fifty, from Messrs. Skin and Flay, milor; and several I O U’s from Sir Henry Smash, Mr. Sanderstead, and Lord Uphillwork,”—replied Ernest, after examining the secret drawers.

“ Schniptz,—will you discount an I O U of Sanderstead’s (your best customer) at ten per cent?”—cried Lord Algernon, suddenly turning upon the startled tailor.

“ Your lordship forgets dat Mr. Sanderstead is still a minor,” stammered Schniptz; “ and really I have shuffered so sheverely lately by—”

“ Oh! confound your sufferings!—Uphillwork, then?—Why, you must make a thousand a year by his father’s state liveries!”

“ Vich give me no right to shuppose, my lord, dat his grace would pay de I O U of his shon;” persisted Schniptz; evidently wise by experience, and as reliant as Sir Robert Peel on the security of a majority.

“ Then I tell you what you shall do, Schniptz! which will risk only half an hour of your precious time.—Your cab’s at the door, I presume?—Drive down to Hoare’s, and get Skin and Flay’s draft cashed for me.”—

“I beg your lordship ten thousand pardons,” said the tailor; “but I vork for von of de firm; and it would be a great injury to me in business vas I seen vid de cheque of a money-lender in my posheshion. It is only de nobility, my lord, vich can do such tings!—*I* am not an independent man.”

“Send it down to the bar,” said Roper, interposing; “the people here will cash a good cheque to any amount.”—

“And present my own bill, on the strength of it,—to any amount! Why can’t *you* get into Schniptz’s cab, while breakfast is preparing, Roper, and get it down for me?” continued he, addressing his guest, and at length condescending to notice my attempts to gain his attention, by lifting me into his arms.

“Thank you, my dear fellow! Like our friend, Schniptz, here, I have to make my way in the world by my respectability—”

“*Oh!*”

—“Of *character!*—As I am about to stand for Parliament, I can’t afford to be seen the bearer of a money-lender’s cheque, any more than your tailor.”

“ If your lordship sall give *me* de draff, *I* will get de money in de course of an hour,” said the officious valet, who seemed aware that *his* respectability was hard to endanger; “ and I sall settle now vid de fellow for de dog, vich is vaiting.”

The proposition was promptly accepted; and what followed between the valet and dog-stealer must remain a secret to posterity. For it was transacted in the ante-room; while I,—luxurious dog!—became the third at that exquisite morning meal, the very aroma of which, *en passant*, had made my mouth water.

“ What sall I give de fellow to drink, my lord?” inquired Ernest, putting his head interrogatively into the room, just as his lordship was beginning to dislocate a cold fowl, of complexion as fair as his own; nor could I help pitying the case of Betsy Sims, when I heard a guinea assigned as the purchase of her husband’s potations for the day!—It was enough to float the Swan, and its shadow Bill Sims, in cream of the valley.

“ That’s a deuced useful fellow of yours, Algy!” said Roper, accepting a wing of chicken to accompany the delicate slice of Westphalia ham, with *aspic à l’estragon*, already on his plate.

“ Useful enough,—and somewhat less tenacious of *his* character than you or Schniptz !”

“ He has perhaps none to lose,—or so much, that he can afford to indulge in irregularities,”—replied the much-enduring friend,—breaking his roll with the air of a man completely at home.

“ I pay him too well to allow him to trouble me with scruples !”—replied my new master. “ A valet without a conscience is one of the luxuries of life in which it is pleasantest to indulge.”

“ But in which a man indulges sadly to his own cost !”—rejoined Roper, more gravely.

“ Luxuries are not to be had without paying for !”—retorted Lord Algernon, who seemed to possess more shrewdness under his cambric and brocade, than at first sight one gave him credit for ;—an opinion in which I became confirmed when, after daintily mincing the wing of his chicken, he good-naturedly placed it before myself.

“ It will be a pretty dog, a year or two hence,” observed Roper, after glancing at the antics of delight with which I requited this delicate attention.

“ The fellow I bought it of (and from whom I also got that white greyhound for Mélanie, when she lost her spaniel last year) warranted it to be two years old,” observed Lord Algernon, observing *me*.

“ And your own eyes might surely warrant it to be a puppy !”—retorted Roper.

“ I have given up trusting my own eyes. That seeing is believing, is a popular fallacy !—I see *you*, for instance, every day arm-in-arm with Uphillwork ; but were I to warrant you his intimate friend, I should be at fault ; since almost before his back is turned, you begin to abuse him.”

I rather expected that this affront, or perhaps the chicken-bone he was discussing, would stick in the throat of Roper.—But some people are unchokeable.

“ And, dog or puppy, you really mean to present the little beast to Mrs. Vernon ?”—inquired he, without returning the preceding shot.

“ Immediately after breakfast ! — But what makes you smile ?”

“ Your prodigality in throwing five-and-twenty guineas so thoroughly away !”

“Throwing them to the dogs, eh?” rejoined Lord Algernon.

“Why you might have had a brace of pointers for the moors, for the same money!”

“I may have *them* into the bargain!—But the five-and-twenty guineas are not thrown away,—since the gift is in redemption of my word. As we were coming up from Ascot, the other day, Mrs. Vernon expressed the greatest desire for a King Charles.”

“Which it is Vernon’s business to gratify!”

“*His* business and *my* pleasure!”

“*Your* pleasure may prove his *displeasure*, if you don’t take care!”—replied Roper, coolly.

“He is at full liberty to take exception at my conduct!”—was the equally cool rejoinder;—  
“and so you may tell him, if you think proper.”

“I was not thinking of *your* conduct, but *hers*. Vernon is a touchy fellow; and should he find her accepting presents from you ——”

“Well?”

“He might possibly turn her out of doors!”

“He could do nothing that would suit me better!” said Lord Algernon, stirring his tea.

“ A little consideration for others, my dear Algy !”—pleaded Roper, who was nevertheless taking care only of himself,—“ I believe the poor woman to be sincerely attached to Vernon !”

“ In which case, she certainly would not accept *cadeaux* from me.”

“ And *has* she accepted the dog ?”

“ That remains to be proved !”—replied Lord Algernon, rising and ringing the bell ; which was so promptly answered by an alert waiter, as to warrant the supposition that he could not have been stationed at any very great distance from the keyhole of the door.

“ Send my man here !” said his lordship, in a more peremptory tone than I had yet heard him assume.—And the length of time that ensued before Ernest condescended to make his appearance, convinced me that his master’s message had found him still engaged in the hall, in negotiation with Bill Sims.

“ Take this dog, with my compliments, to number forty-six, Curzon Street,” said he.

“ Directly, my lord ?”

“ Directly !”



“ And wait for an answer, my lord ? ”

Lord Algernon was about to answer in the negative, when Roper interposed.

“ If you wish to ascertain the point in question,” said he, “ an answer is indispensable.”

“ I scarcely know what point *is* in question,—except how Ernest will manage to get the poor little thing along the grilling pavement at this time of day, without burning its eyes out ! ”

“ Better order your cab for it ! ” retorted Roper, with a sneer. “ The point in question, however, is, whether Mrs. Vernon will accept it.”

“ I am not going to shirk even *that* ! ” resumed Lord Algernon, haughtily ;—“ and since you seem so anxious, it shall be determined in a moment.—Lose no time, Ernest ! ” continued he, addressing his valet somewhat more civilly than his friend,—“ my Brougham,—a coach,—a cab,—whatever can be had quickest.—Desire to see Mrs. Vernon herself.—Give her my message. Watch precisely the way in which it is received ; and hasten back here with the answer, *mind*, whatever it may be—without omitting or softening a syllable ! ”

I will not say where I wished the officious

Roper; but for whom, I should have been permitted to finish my breakfast, or rather *their* breakfast, in peace. But just as I was making a dead point at the chicken-bones on his lordship's plate, I was snatched up by the valet, who seemed perfectly aware, by the tone of his master's voice, that the case was urgent;—and in a moment, the surly porter was despatched for a hack-cab.

No need to record the amount of oaths emitted by Mr. Ernest. Suffice it, that though he swore considerably at *me*, as the cause of deranging him on so hot a morning for so idle a purpose, he swore twice as much at Roper, whom he designated under the graceless name of Lord Algernon's toady.

“Either I get that fellow out of his place, or I sall give up mine!”—said the indignant valet de chambre. “Two of us in von household is von mosh too many.”

## CHAPTER IV.

CEL. Cupid have mercy!—Not a word?—

ROS. Not one to throw at a dog!

CEL. Thy words are too precious to be cast away upon curs!—

Throw some of them at *me*!

SHAKSPEARE.

Dans la langue des hommes,

Cela s'appelle aimer!

ARISTIDE LATOUR.

I VOWED a vow to myself in commencing these memoirs, to be perfectly frank with my readers, by way of inducing them to be thoroughly indulgent with *me*; and sooner than assume a virtue where I have it not, I am free to confess that great as were the efforts I had made to recommend myself to Lord Algernon, in the hope of escaping from the cuffs of Mrs. Sims and a diet harder than that of the bitterest of Unions, they were exceeded in my endeavour to captivate the eye of the fair

lady into whose presence I was ushered by his lordship's valet de chambre.

Her approval, indeed, was not hard to win; for young, pretty, and discerning, my beauty, youth, and intelligence found in hers a kindred recognition.

“The most perfect beauty I ever saw in my life!”—cried she, fondly caressing me, and bestowing on my glossy poll a shower of kisses, the fervency of which reminded me, for the first time since I parted from him, of poor Jem;—(and what a place to remember him was that exquisitely furnished boudoir of Mrs. Vernon's,—a wilderness of Dresden china, Bohemian glass, mirrors, gilding, marble, and or-moulu!)—“Pray tell Lord Algernon, with my best compliments, how greatly I am obliged to him.”

Ernest lingered near the door,—not as Jem would have lingered, to take a parting look of me, as I fawned on the silken dress of my new mistress; but as a fashionable physician lingers, for the fee of a shy patient. He waited in vain, however. For though the object of Lord Algernon's homage was generous to prodigality, she did not know how

to offer a sovereign to a gentleman, whose gold guard chain was nearly the size of a collar of the Garter. It is more than probable that, before he reached the bottom of the stairs, Mrs. Vernon had her share in the execrations previously lavished on Roper and myself.

And now, I was, indeed, the happiest of dogs. Could I have chosen my own condition in life, it would have been as pet to a young and pretty woman, without children to torment me, in just such a snug, cozy, elaborate little nest of a house as the one in which I found myself; where, though not an inch of floor but was covered with the richest carpets, a cachemire shawl was instantly placed in the corner of the sofa, to make me a bed. The lady's-maid was summoned and charged with the tenderest care of me; and greatly as I admired the elegance of my pretty mistress's attire and tastefulness of her house, I own I was surprised, during the dialogue that ensued, at the tone of familiarity established between her and her attendant.—It was not in *such* terms I had heard the valet de chambre addressed by Lord Algernon.—With the intuitive sense of propriety of which I

have already boasted, it struck me at once that that there must be some difference between this pretty, good-humoured Mrs. Vernon and the high-born dames I had seen in their emblazoned carriages in the park.

I had no cause to find fault with her, however; for the whole remainder of the morning was spent in caressing me.—There were books in the room,—but she did not open them;—there was work upon the table,—but the needle remained fixed in the embroidery frame.—When weary of play, I lay down quietly on my cachemire to rest myself, she sat and yawned; or watched the movements of the rich clock upon the chimney-piece, and compared it, minute by minute, with a little watch she took from her bosom, as if waiting for something,—or somebody.

“Lord Algernon, perhaps!”—thought I; and right glad was I to think how crestfallen must have been the toady, on Ernest’s return, to learn how graciously and gratefully I had been accepted, in defiance of his prognostications.

But whether Lord Algernon, or another, she was disappointed.—Curzon Street is a consider-

able thoroughfare so long as lords and lackies are to be found in London; and throughout the afternoon, numberless were the cabs, tilburies, and phaetons, which caused my new proprietress to start from her lounging chair, and rush to the front window; to return again with trailing foot and disconcerted countenance, as they rattled onwards towards the park.

It was not thus I had been accustomed to see Bill Sims waited for by his better half:—and I had, consequently, no reason to suppose that it was the master of the house whose absence occasioned such marked discomposure.

“ My pretty little Rattle !” said she, raising me for the twentieth time to her lips, and pressing her hand caressingly over the well-feathered jabot of my chest, the silky fleece of which more than rivalled that of a Thibet goat,—“ my pretty little Rattle,—in what a number of dreary hours will you serve me for a companion !—My days will not be half so cheerless *now* !”

I rewarded the compliment, of course, by reciprocating her caresses. But a few moments afterwards, I became indignant, on seeing her

guilty of a great yawn, and hearing her burst into renewed exclamations against the tediousness of the day. Never, in the course of our whole acquaintance, had poor Jem evinced by a yawn his weariness of my company! Never had I heard his toil-worn mother complain of the length of the day!—Was time so much harder to pass in that luxurious boudoir, than in the dirty garret?—

If so, I had exchanged for the worse. Already, indeed, I began to miss my daily promenade with Bill, beside the rippling Serpentine. Ignominious as I had found it to be paraded *la corde au cou*, it enabled me at least to enjoy the light of day and pure air of heaven, and roll on the greensward under the admiring eyes of half the beauties of the London season;—a pleasanter thing than the atmosphere of a stuffy boudoir, overcharged with stale perfumes—vapours of extinct pastilles and evaporated *eau à bruler*,—tête-à-tête with a yawning woman!—Already, I had lived long enough in the West End, to become tetchy and fastidious!

Even with the dinner to which I accompanied my mistress at seven o'clock, I ventured to find fault. It was not half so plentiful as Lord Alger-



non's breakfast; and instead of half-a-dozen adroit waiters, we were attended only by the page in the green livery with a chest like the sample-window of a button-maker, whom I had seen waiting for an answer in the ante-room of the Athol.

The meal, however, was speedily despatched; and again we returned to the close boudoir, to sit and yawn at each other.—It was dusk, so that our mutual association was audible rather than visible; and how strange it seemed to me to find a woman in the full possession of her limbs and faculties, expend the whole day in doing nothing,—after seeing the four-and-twenty hours scarcely suffice for the labour needful to the scantiest possible human household and maintenance!

At length, when both my lazy mistress and indignant self had sunk together into a gentle doze, we were roused by a low knock at the street door; which seemed to *me* so much like any other knock at any other door, that I could scarcely understand why she should start up and rush to the staircase,—where all was now so dark that she certainly could discern nothing of the individual on whom she was already bestowing the tenderest of

welcomes. I had thought her exuberant in her caresses, even to myself. I discovered by her greeting to the new comer, that Mrs. Vernon's nature was generally demonstrative.

“ And why are you so late?” cried she, addressing her guest, or husband, or whatever he might be,—(for the step and voice were at least of the masculine gender,)—“ I thought the day would never, *never* be over !”

“ I told you,” pleaded the voice, “ that I should be late. I have been the whole day on a committee, and dined at the House ;—where I must be back for the division, at eleven.”

“ What a slave you make of yourself !” faltered Mrs. Vernon.

“ What a slave I am made of !—My time is not my own.”

“ I wish it were *mine*,” was the affectionate rejoinder of my pretty mistress,—“ and I would make it pass more pleasantly.”

“ God knows, all that *does* render it pleasant is derived from *you* !”—retorted he, in the same tone of endearment ;—“ and no sooner am I away from you, than my chief thought is how soonest to get

back to you again!—When harassed by noise, opposition, and vexations of all kinds, I think of this quiet room, containing all I care for in this world, and become patient in a moment !”

“ I wish you would teach *me* the art of patience !” rejoined my fair mistress, with a heavy sigh.—“ Every day, the time of your absence seems longer and longer ; till I become fretful and childish, and fancy you could return sooner, if you liked, and that you are only staying away to amuse yourself among those whose company pleases you better than mine.”

“ *Whose* company ever did or ever *could* please me better, dearest, than yours ?” said her companion, in the most persuasive and mellifluous tone. “ You are all in all to me, Mary ;—the only human being who ever loved me for myself ;—in spite of my jealous temper,—in spite of my fits of despondency,—in spite of all there is in me that is morose and disagreeable.”

I thought I could perceive through the twilight that, thus adjured, she raised to her lips the hand enclasped in her own. At all events, her voice had grown very tremulous before she spoke again.

“ I used to think so all the time we were abroad last autumn !” said she ; “ for we were then always together. There was nothing to divide us *then* ! But now you are in London again,—among your friends,—your family”——

“ Which of them would make the sacrifices for me, Mary, that *you* have made !”

“ *All*,—I should think,—if they had the same opportunity. *Who* would ever neglect an occasion of pleasing you ! But the thing I am most afraid of when you are away from me, is that, among persons of your own condition in life,—among women educated like yourself, and worthy to be your companions,—you must feel so much happier, and the time must pass so much more pleasantly than with one like me, one who has so little to talk to you about,—one every way so much your inferior !”——

“ Does a heart like yours, Mary, weigh for nothing in the scale ? And do you suppose, dearest, that I am inattentive to the pains you have taken to remedy your deficiencies of education ?”

“ In Germany I used to try to read, and make myself like other people. But not *here* !—Here,

I never open a book.—Here, I can scarcely fix my attention on a newspaper,” replied Mrs. Vernon.

“And why not?—for here, you have your whole time to yourself!”

“That is the very reason!—I can do nothing when I am alone.—I cannot *bear* being alone!—While we were abroad and you were always with me,—interested in all I said, or read, or thought,—it was pleasant to think and read.—But you have now other pursuits, George, other objects and cares. We meet for so short a time,—and while you are here, you are always in a hurry! I never feel as if it would be right to lose a moment in telling you all that has been troubling my mind while you were away; though every day, during your absence, I resolve to open my heart.”

“Is it *not* open then?”—said George, somewhat anxiously.

“It is not *closed*.—But so long as you do not take the trouble of inquiring what is passing in it, I do not feel that we understand each other as we used.—It seems now scarcely worth while to improve myself.—Do what I might, I could never place myself on the level with others,

who, with such much higher qualifications, strive equally to please you.—And so I sit, puzzled and wondering, all day;—doing nothing,—and only listening for your horse on the pavement, or your knock at the door!”

“George” did not appear very much dissatisfied with her proficiency.—But perhaps he wished to see the tender looks with which such tender words were accompanied. For he rang for candles; and a few minutes afterwards, the green page brought a china lamp into the room, and placed it on a table at some distance from the sofa where we were all sitting.

As he quitted the room, “George” proceeded to draw down the blinds, which the green monster had neglected; and on returning towards the sofa, caught for the first time a glimpse of my bright eyes watching him from among the folds of the white cachemire.

“What on earth have you got there?” cried he, —hastily drawing aside the folds of the shawl.

“The greatest darling of a dog you ever beheld!”—said Mrs. Vernon, placing me carefully in his hands.—“Is it not a beauty? In the joy

of seeing you, I forgot to show him to you before."

"A thorough-bred King Charles,—and beautifully marked!—Where did you meet with it?—It must have cost you a fortune!"

"It was a present,"—replied my pretty mistress,—and, as far as I could perceive, without the slightest embarrassment.

"*A present?*"—reiterated George,—in a less assured voice.

"A present from Lord Algernon."

In a moment, I found myself dropped into my mistress's silken lap; and with so abrupt a movement, as almost to dislocate my spine.

"Do you not remember," added she, a little startled, "that I expressed a wish, as we were returning from Ascot last week, for a dog of this description?"

"Did you?—I suppose I was not attending."

"Yes, you *were* attending; for you reminded me of the fate of poor Spot, and said that all pet dogs came to mischance."

"I recollect."

"And so did Lord Algernon, you see; for he

has been at the trouble of procuring me this perfect beauty."

"Lord Algernon has no very urgent demands upon his time,"—replied George, with a smile in which the bitter preponderated.

"Still, it was very good-natured of him to think of my poor little dog!"

"And what is mere good-nature but a fool?"—quoted her friend, with increasing astringency.

"At all events, one is better pleased with the folly which is good-natured, than with selfish wisdom!"—said Mrs. Vernon; on hearing which, I was not very much surprised that George arose and walked to the window, while *she* remained kissing and petting me on the sofa.

I suspect he was in the habit of being followed to the window and coaxed back again, when he indulged in movements so petulant; for after remaining there in indignant silence a minute or two, he stalked back again, more angry than before; and then it was, as he threw himself into a lounging chair at a little distance from the sofa, that I had first an opportunity of noticing the handsomest man I ever saw in my life.



It was not the delicate regularity of feature of Lord Algernon ;—it was not the searching glance and expressive mouth of Roper.—His beauty consisted in a charm then new to me, and which I have since learned to estimate under the name of distinction. Tall and slight, with a profusion of rich brown hair, his natural complexion was so pale that one felt doubly surprised at the sudden flush which emotion of any kind produced upon his somewhat hollow cheek,—such as was created by his first introduction to myself.

“ And pray did you expect this new favourite ?” said he, with undiminished bitterness of tone.

“ A little !—But I thought,—I fancied,—after so often repeating how much I wished for a dog to keep me company during your absence,—that it would come from yourself !”

“ I meant to inquire whether Lord Algernon had promised you this identical dog ?”—said he, a little softened by the tenderness of her manner.

“ No,—I was never more surprised or pleased than when his servant brought it here this morning. Yet I ought not to have been surprised.—For that evening in the carriage, he expressly

inquired whether I preferred a King Charles, or the Blenheim breed.—You must have heard him! —But no!—I remember!—You were talking politics at the time, with Mr. Roper.”

“ You appear to have been attentive to the minutest particulars of the conversation !”

“ My life is not very eventful.—Nothing has occurred since to efface it from my memory.”

“ And do you mean to keep this dog?” inquired he, in a husky voice, while I endeavoured to excuse his ungraciousness by a thousand deprecatory caresses that were fiercely rebutted.

“ *Keep it?*—Why surely I shall never get a prettier?—It is smaller than the Duchess of Wigmore’s, which you showed me one day in the park; and its coat is softer than swansdown. Only feel it !”

The sole reply vouchsafed by George, was an impetuous shrug of the shoulders.

“ I could almost fancy,” said she, with an air of candour which could not be assumed,—“ that you were angry with Lord Algernon for giving me the dog !”

“ Not angry with Lord Algernon.”

“ Yet but for *you*, I should never have known him !” said she, “ But for *you*, I should never have endeavoured to please him !”

“ You *have* endeavoured to please him then !”

“ When you introduced him to me on our return from abroad, you told me he was your cousin, —that he was ruining himself as fast as possible, —that he had met with a disappointment of the affections which was producing a fatal effect on his conduct and character ; and begged me to do all in my power towards weaning him from the excesses in which he was entangled.”

“ It is only too true !—I said and did all this, and deserve to be shot for my folly !”—cried the angry man she was addressing.—“ I ought to have remembered that it was nearly under the same circumstances I first made your acquaintance, when presented to you by the Duke of Wigmore !”

“ Vernon—Vernon ! —such a reproach from *you* !” cried the horror-struck woman,—throwing me from her, and starting from her place.—“ Can you be so cruel and so unjust !—Can you call the circumstances parallel !—Can you—*can* you !”

And falling back on the sofa, she covered her face with her hands.

“ I *was* wrong to call them parallel !”—replied Mr. Vernon, with undiminished bitterness ; “ for the treachery in *this* case is far greater than when I was vile enough and mad enough to persuade you to quit the protection of the duke.—*He* was nothing to me but a mere acquaintance,—a man without claims on my forbearance,—a man whose vanity had tempted him to show me that the most beautiful woman in England was in his power !—Whereas Lord Algernon is my relation,—my near relation and friend !”

“ And do you mean to compare my feelings towards *you*, the only object of my affection,—my preference,—my trust,—my worship,—with the bond of necessity that attached me to *him* ?”—cried the distressed woman. “ *Who* better knows than yourself the treachery by which, when a starving, repining, miserable girl,—nay, miserable *child*,—I was betrayed into his hands !—And when I found there was a worse destiny in the world than the cold and hunger which had made me his,—wretched and ashamed as I was, I tried

to escape and make my way back to my parents,—though so closely watched as always to be defeated,—till it was too late!—When I *did* recover my freedom, they had quitted the poor neighbourhood in which I deserted them, — driven away perhaps by the insults of their neighbours;—for never could I obtain a clue to them again!”

“It was not of *this* we were talking, Mary,”—said Vernon, on seeing her convulsed by an agony of tears.—“You have done your utmost to seek them out.—The first cause of intimacy between us, if you remember, was your confiding to me your secret, and commissioning me to make inquiries.”

“Which I dared not entrust to the duke!” interrupted my poor mistress,—who had now lost all control over herself. “And how kindly did you undertake my commission!—and how gently soothe and comfort me, when I lost all hope of tidings of my poor family,—*dead* perhaps—dead of shame and misery for my sake!”—

How I longed at that moment for the power of satisfying—“poor Mary—poor, poor little Mary,” that she was mistaken.—For a thousand circum-

stances which had come to my knowledge in the Sims's attic, convinced me that this beautiful, this luxurious woman, was no other than their misguided child!—

“To the duke,” continued she, “I would have died rather than talk of such things!—So hard as he was,—so selfish,—so different from myself in age and nature!—You have often praised me for disinterestedness because, in spite of the vast sum by which he offered to secure my independence, and your assurances of the impossibility of your providing for me in a similar manner, I quitted his house to follow you to the continent,—to the world's end,—no matter where,—through life or death.—But there was no cause for praise!—I loathed him,—I loved *you*!—I would have died rather than remain under his roof!”

“You have forgotten one point, Mary!—You have forgotten my warning that I was not only too poor to maintain you as you *had* been maintained, but that the happiness of my mother must still retain a prior claim over my conduct; so that nothing would ever induce me to make you my wife.”

“Have I attempted to alter your determination?—Have I urged you into a single act by which Lady Elizabeth Vernon’s happiness was likely to be endangered?—When her letters gave me cause to fear that your sojourn abroad made her uneasy, was I not the first to induce you to return home?”

“Yes! and now I am here, you are the first to break my heart, by condescending to accept, from others, pleasures and luxuries I am unable to afford you!”

“I do not understand you!”—said Mrs. Vernon, turning very pale.—“When I had reason to suspect that my carriage was an expense beyond your means, did I not instantly give it up?”

“You assured me that it was an annoyance to drive about to shops, where you wanted nothing; or parade in the Park, where even the men of your acquaintance hesitated to return your bow. But you cannot suppose it was to the carriage and horses I was alluding!—I am not aware that others have been provided for you by my friends.”

“I thought you might know that Lord Algernon had sent me a box for Grisi’s benefit to-night, and placed his brougham at my disposal.”

“Which you have of course accepted?”—cried Vernon, starting from his seat.

“No! thinking you would be at the House, I preferred spending the evening at home.”

“In that case,” resumed Mr. Vernon, rolling his chair, as if inadvertently, a trifle nearer towards the sofa, ere he reseated himself,—“in that case, Mary, *why* accept the dog?”—

“In *what* case?—The two things are wholly dissimilar!—On hearing me express in your presence a strong desire for a little pet, Lord Algernon offered his services to procure one; and you seemed to offer no objection.”

“And if,” cried Vernon, with kindling warmth, “the twenty or thirty guineas necessary to procure such an animal, were just now an object to me?—I am, as you know, the creature of maternal bounty.—My mother is a widow, Mary. Her means are limited, and I would die rather than encroach upon them.—In my desire to provide you a home not so unlike the one you had quitted, as to make you fancy me a niggard,—I far exceeded the slender limits of my fortune.—These are miserable details, dear love, to force upon you,—but anything rather than that you should fancy your wishes disre-



garded! — In a word,” cried he, with glowing eloquence, (for *pectus est quod facit desertos et vis mentis*,) “every guinea of my ready money is bespoken by the claims of those by whom this house was furnished; and while waiting the half-yearly payment of my allowance, rather than overdraw my bankers, a thing I never did in my life, and by which I should feel my mother’s name to be as much dishonoured as my own,) I have suffered Algernon Howarth to obtain an advantage over me in your opinion by an appearance of alacrity in fulfilling your wishes, which, God knows, I would have perilled the best drops in my heart to retain!” —

I was nearly precipitated to the ground by the suddenness of Mrs. Vernon’s movement as she started up to ring the bell.—Had the house been on fire, the alarum could not have been more vehement, or more promptly answered by the odious green page.

“Take this dog to the Athol,”—said she, with broken utterance,—“and deliver it carefully to Lord Algernon Howarth’s servant.”

“Any message, ma’am?”

“ My compliments,—and it is not of the kind I wanted.”

Ungrateful woman !—She did not detain me for so much as a parting token of endearment !—

What—what would I not have given to be an eye-witness of the manner in which this generous act of self-sacrifice was acknowledged by the penitent Vernon, towards one disposed to address him in the terms of the spell-bound Helena :

The more you beat me, will I fawn on you.

Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me,—strike me,—

Neglect me,—lose me,—only give me leave,

Unworthy as I am, to follow you !

Before or since, I never saw a woman who better understood the first duty of her sex !—

## CHAPTER V.

Thou seest, thou wicked varlet *now*, what's come upon thee!

Thou art to continue *now*, thou varlet,—thou art to continue!

SHAKSPEARE.

Fuit magna vi animi et corporis, sed ingenio malo provoque.

SALLUST.

It served me right,—it only served me just right for my ingratitude in so thankfully renouncing poor Jem; and so *unthankfully* presuming to find fault with my new condition in Curzon Street!

After being well pinched under the arm of the page,—well cuffed by Ernest, who scouted me like a bad shilling returned upon the utterer's hands,—and sworn at by the head-waiter as a nuisance superadded to a household which already made itself sufficiently troublesome in the hotel,—I

sneaked into the corner of the sofa into which I was flung, to make myself such a bed as the cold glazed calico would admit; sobbing as heartily as Jem had sobbed, when he took leave of me for the last time.

“The porter sits up for my lord, and will go to your room, Mr. Ernest, and let you know if any thing is wanted,” said the consequential waiter to the consequential valet.—“This little brute must sleep here;—for I suppose, sir, *you* won’t choose to be troubled with it?”

Of course he did *not* choose; and I was left for the first time alone in a strange place, to whine away the night. For the sun was shining bright into the room when at length Lord Algernon made his appearance;—no longer the fair, spruce, effeminate coxcomb of the day before;—but with his dress disordered,—his eyes strained and bloodshot,—an oath upon his lips,—and hatred, I suspect, in his heart. The porter, by way of revenging himself, perhaps, for his long night-watch, had informed his lordship while lighting his bed-candle, of my precipitate return; and the vexation of finding the triumph he had enjoyed over Roper pre-

mature, served to complete the ill-humour generated at the hazard-table and fomented with gin-punch.

Awed by his oaths, I crept so close into the corner of the sofa as to be imperceptible; and when he flung himself upon it to await the arrival of the half-awake Ernest, to assist him to undress, was all but stifled, like the grand chamberlain of a German count, under the consequence of my master.

“What has become of the little brute?” demanded Lord Algernon, as the *Kammerdiener*, while replacing his tight, varnished boots, with slippers of embroidered velvet,

(Wrought by no hand, as you may guess,  
But those of Fairly Fair,)

confirmed the intelligence communicated by the porter.

“I vas leave him on de sofa, milor,”—replied he, peering round the room with blinking eyes in fruitless search of me.—“I mosh afraid dose vaiteer sall leave open de door, and de dog sall evade!”

“For *your* sake, sir, I hope not!”—replied Lord

Algernon, who, contrary to appearances, was as sober as a judge;—"since in that case, I should not only open the door, but request you to walk out after him.—I do not intend,"—continued he, muttering between his teeth, and little suspecting how nearly I was within his reach,—“to cheat Roper of his revenge.—If the dog should be lost, he will always suppose, when he hears of Mrs. Vernon’s cursed caprice, that I sent it purposely out of the way.”

Conceiving that neither master nor man was just then in a temper to be trifled with, I remained so quiet as to attract no attention; but, following my new master into his bed-room, concealed myself out of sight so long as his man was in attendance;—nor was it till all was still in the room, the valet retired, and the night-bolt drawn, that I crept out of my concealment, and, enamoured at first sight of the whiteness and softness of the first christian-like bed I had ever seen in my life, leapt lightly on the coverlet. I was soon as sound asleep at my master’s feet, as though *I* also had been playing hazard, and drowning in strong gin-punch the recollection of my weakness.

“ I owe you ten guineas, Roper,” said he, when, in the midst of breakfast, next morning, somewhere about two of the clock, the toady made his appearance. “ Mrs. Vernon *has* sent back the dog !”

“ After accepting it ?—By Jove a double affront to the one I backed by my bet !—That woman is getting *too* insolent.”

“ Say what you will of my folly ; but be so good as to leave Mrs. Vernon alone !”—said Lord Algeron with a degree of sternness little in accordance with his effeminate features or complexion.

“ Why, what excuse did she give for her incivility ?”

“ There needed none !—The only thing that required apology, was my presumption.”

“ Your presumption !—The presumption of the Duke of Normanford’s son, and Marquis of Ulva’s brother, in sending one of the most thoroughbred dogs that ever was seen, to a cabman’s daughter !—For neither more nor less than a cabman’s daughter she *is* !—The Duke of Wigmore told me so himself.”

“ Then he is a dirtier fellow than I took him for,—which is saying a great deal !”

“ But I’ll tell you what you shall do, Algy, if you like—since you talk so disparagingly of the dog”—added Roper,—watching as he spoke the countenance of my noble master, to ascertain the direction of the wind.—“ For the ten guineas you have lost, you shall only give me five ;—and instead of hanging the little brute, throw him into the bargain.”

“ I seldom order a dog hanged on Wednesday, for which I paid five and twenty guineas on Tuesday,”—was Lord Algernon’s contemptuous reply ;—“ still less am I in the habit of sneaking out of a bet, or screwing my friends.—If you have a fancy for the little beast,—for which, as you justly premise I have no sort of use,—you are heartily welcome to him.” (I could hardly refrain from setting up a whine of protest against this decree !) “ But here are your ten guineas !—As you saw Ernest offer to discount the cheque of Skin and Flay, you need not look so much surprised at my having money in my pockets.”

Mr. Roper made no sort of difficulty. But he made several sorts of jokes,—in which the pun preponderated ; probably in hopes of covering with a laugh the awkwardness of slipping his friend’s



money into his purse,—and carrying off his friend's dog in a hack cab. For he was far too well acquainted with the ground he stood on with Ernest, to entertain the smallest hope of having him translated to his lodgings by any other assistance than his own.

It was perhaps in retribution upon the insolence with which I had contemplated my sudden promotion in life the preceding day, that every step I now made in the world was retrogressive. But if not sufficiently enchanted at finding myself in the first instance own dog to a fashionable young lord, and in the next, to one of the prettiest women in London, I was bitterly indignant at degenerating into the property of a toad-eater!—I would almost as soon have belonged to the cabman!

Nor could anything exceed my surprise on learning, soon after my *entrée* into the establishment of my new master, that this fellow, whose conduct entitled me to look upon him as little better than Ernest, was the son of a Northern baronet of high descent.—I am not sure but that I felt more ashamed of him than ever, after the discovery.

Nor did the motives that transpired for his con-

duct, raise it in my opinion.—Like Cæsar, Roper was ambitious.—His father, whose family was as large as his means were small, having no power of advancing his views, his only chance of getting into parliament was per aid of some friendly boroughholder : and Lord Algernon Howarth, who with the fortune of an uncle had inherited considerable parliamentary interest, was the very man for him,—provided he could convert a sort of running feud which had subsisted between them at Harrow, into a more conciliatory feeling. To Lord Algernon he consequently attached himself by all sorts of hooks and filaments, both of gold and hemp.

But he had another string to his bow ;—and between the good will of Lord Algernon, and the still better will of a certain Lady Glengaff,—a first lady of the treasury of the highest influence,—Roper fondly flattered himself that the lapse of a month or two would secure the accomplishment of his wishes ; and he was accordingly “reading up,” with all his might and main, in hopes of qualifying himself for the most brilliant début which had dazzled the eyes, or bewildered the ears of parliament, during the present century of “sensations.”

The single gentleman in lodgings to whom I now appertained, flattered himself in short with the hope of becoming a more solid Canning,—a more consistent Brougham,—a more brilliant Stanley,—a happier Pitt.

And how unmercifully did he burn the midnight taper, without consideration for my aching head;—and how horridly did we both begin to smell of the lamp, which though fed with *huile antique*, was certainly not *à la rose* ! I can promise those who know nothing about the matter, that the bubble reputation, if easily blown in *one* sense of the word, is sad hard work in the other !—Though as far as regards myself, I have always found cramming a pleasant pastime,—to cram for parliament is as dry an occupation as working a stone quarry, or courting an heiress, or doing a friend's duty in his parish church.

I had not been a week consigned to the care of the steady, sobersuited gentleman who groomed not only myself but my master and his horse, before I began to wonder what could possibly be his object in bidding even a sum so much below my value as he had offered for me to Lord Algernon; for the

rational Mr. Roper took no more notice of me when once installed in his establishment, than he would have done of a rose-tree or a new novel!—There was nothing in me to quote—My bark afforded no precedents for the solidification of his speeches.—My antics and *his* ancients were sadly at variance; and a tortoise would have afforded better companionship for him than my gamesome frolics. At last the murder came out!

“I trust you are taking pains with the dog, Hill?” said he one morning to his factotum. “At present it is but a puppy; but as soon as its education is complete, I mean to make it a present to Lady Glengaff!”

Now Lady Glengaff was, as I said before, the second string to Mr. Roper’s bow!

By this charge to his gentleman of the bed-chamber, I so far benefited, however, that, on pretence of the indispensability of air and exercise to the maintenance of my health and morals, Hill obtained daily leave of absence to afford me a walk,—which walk usually terminated at the nearest alehouse;—and had I at command the pen of Dickens, or Lever, to impart interest to a porter

pot, and sentiment to the early purl, I would a tale unfold,—a tale of the Red Lion,—such as must produce a general roar.—But it strikes me that the tap-school has been overdrawn ; and if the world of letters,—(according to some the most illiterate world going,)—is sick to surfeiting of the *eau sucrée* of fashionable novels, Old Tom has also become superannuated. Eugene Sue is still at the receipt of custom. But *his* license does not extend to British compounds.

My new preceptor was what is called highly “respectable looking ;” respectable-looking as most private tutors. Like other objects belonging to Mr. Roper, he wore a double face, or more correctly speaking, served like the bi-lingual Tyrians, a double purpose.—With the view of retaining a place in the steward’s room when visiting with his master at country-houses, and his dignity in society as a valet and upper servant, he had conditioned in his hiring to remain ostensibly groom of the bedchamber ; and he was consequently unhumiliated by a livery suit. His vocation was a profound secret between himself and the Mews ; and every evening when his master went out to

dinner, (for Roper was a systematically dining-out man,) Hill, in his cast-off clothes,—mostly a black suit that gave him exactly the air of a master-undertaker,—used to proceed to his grave courtship, of the serious housekeeper of a single lady of fortune residing in a cheerless, roomy, old-fashioned house in Portland Place.

In our Great Babylon, which, among other characteristic advantages, boasts a subterraneous story for the better engenderment of damp, mildew, and malaria, compelling our architecture to remain squat, and our menial classes to retain a becoming sense of their semi-humanity by existing in a state of semi-interment,—nothing can exceed the dreariness of *official* life.—Commanding a pleasant view of a dank area, highly flavoured with the sewers, a coal-hole, and a dust-hole,—the winds of heaven know better than to wander out of their way for the better ventilation of such noisome regions;—and well do I remember the nausea that used to beset me on diving down the unsightly vault-like stone stairs, on the arm of Mr. Hill, to pay my devoirs to Mrs. Mopsome!—How I loathed that dull, square, half-lighted house-

keeper's room,—where we all three dozed for hours, without a sound audible but the measured grate of the pendulum of an old clock, through whose dusty glass the hours seemed ashamed to show their faces.—The slate-coloured paper—the sad coloured wool-bare Scotch carpet,—the dingy old green baize that covered the tables,—the fusty, solemn-looking, worn-out books ranged against the wall, dogs-eared and full of marks—(Mrs. Raffald's and Mrs. Glass's recipe books side by side, with the *Whole Duty of Man* and the *Pilgrim's Progress*!)—and, above all, a perpetual smell of peppermint that pervaded the room, in which Mrs. Mopsome was in the habit of drying the herbs that arrived weekly from her old mistress's country seat,—used to oppress my spirits like an evening lecture.

Never was there so dumb a courtship!—The dry, angular spinster used to sit and sew;—the calculating, demure bachelor to sit and hem.—The flies buzzing in the window, especially when in the morning preserving had been going on, formed the only enlivenment of the place. The maiden lady, proprietress of the house, was a prude of such bitter rigidity, that her housekeeper was

compelled to conduct the ten years' siege, to which she predestined her charms in the savings' bank, with the creepmouse decorum of a convent parlour.

After listening to their chilling monosyllables, (which, like the old clock, struck only every quarter of an hour,) touching changes of weather, as demonstrated by "shooting corns" and "twinges of rheumatiz,"—I would have thanked any sympathising Christian to hang me in his garter!—The very cat, which hated me, had sat on its fusty woollen cushion, at the feet of the old spinster, till it had not energy to fly!—Far gone in hypochondriacism, its green eyes surveyed me with a feeble glare of undemonstrative abhorrence.

It was from the measured communications of the sobersuited Mr. Hill to his grim love, that I first learned to appreciate the consequence of my master.—When Sir Marmaduke Roper died, and that excellent young man succeeded to his estates, the faithful Hill was to be made house-steward at Roper Hall;—or, better still,—for Sir Marmaduke, like a sturdy old fox-hunter as he was, was probably destined to a green old age,—as soon as



Mr. Roper got into parliament, Hill was equally sure of a snug place in the Customs, or of a king's messengership,—whichever best suited his views,—“or the views of his well wishers.”

In pronouncing the word “well-wishers,” the twirling of his thumbs was accelerated to double-quick time; while vainly endeavouring to ascertain the sentiments of his gaunt companion, by a scrutinizing glance at her parchment visage. But, alas! there was more speculation in the green eyes of the tabby at her feet, than in the ghastly spectacles which masked the movements of her own!

One evening, we were so seated,—the atmosphere scented with thyme, marjoram, and basil, like Solomon's dinner of herbs, or an Old Bailey bouquet,—when the still-room maid put her head into the room; and, instead of her usual inquiry, “vwhether candles vas wanted,” informed the prim housekeeper that “Mrs. Lewson was waiting her orders.”

It was now *her* turn to hem, which she did audibly once or twice, ere she ventured on so strong a measure as to hint that Mrs. Lewson's

visit was inconvenient, that “she was engaged very particular; and would be glad if her niece could call another time.”

But before she had half done hemming, the door and still-room maid and all seemed blown aside by the sudden gust of a whirlwind; and in rustled a furbelowed dame, whose garments wrought about in divers colours, her gay shawl, her pink silk bonnet, her exuberant curls, and the frillings of her voluminous lace collar, seemed to bring light and life into the stagnant atmosphere of that unincidental chamber.

“My dear aunt,” cried she, with the most affected gesture, as the elderly maiden rose perpendicularly to bid her anything but welcome,—“I would not on no account leave town without saying a jew; and our people are off to Wigmore Castle next week.—Her grace went early to the opera to-night, on account of the new singer,—(with whom her grace is quite infatuated,)—so I took the opportunity to bring you a few peaches.—Our forcing houses, you know, are rather famous.”

“Mr. Camomile does not allow me to eat fruit,”—

replied the frigid aunt, scarcely unclosing her thin lips for the emission of the words.—“ I’m obliged to you the same, Susan, and wish you a pleasant journey.”

Instead of accepting the hint, Mrs. Lewson accepted the chair which my preceptor had risen to offer; and, to the great annoyance of the baffled aunt, a recognition ensued.

“ I think we have had the honour of seeing you, sir, at Wigmore Castle? With Lord Algynon How’rth, if I recollect?”

And having been set right in this particular, polite inquiries ensued after the health of his grace’s gentleman, Moosoo Laurent; and Moosoo Beshymell, the French cook.

“ Monseer Laurent is no longer with us,”—replied the fascinating waiting woman, throwing the veil a little further back on her pink bonnet, and so disposing her flounces as to render visible the point of a varnished-leather shoe. “ Beshymell, poor soul, is as well as can be expected after the labours of the season.—Three grand balls, four state banquets, a *déjeuner ally forjett*, and

eighteen to dinner every Sunday, are a sad pull on a man's constitution !”

“ Eighteen to dinner every Sunday !”—burst, in her own despite, from the prim lips of the maiden aunt. “ Then I'm sure the hairy stock-oracy is quite right to fill their houses with papists and hinfidels ; for folks who have thought of their precious souls, Susan, would think twice before they entered 'em.”

“ And yet I often tell Beshymell,” added Mrs. Lewson,—flourishing her handkerchief as she turned towards Mr. Roper's own man,—addressing *him* as a man of the world, and capable of understanding her,—“ that notwithstanding his fatigues during the season, he prefers London to the castle !—Yes, I am sure he do !—For here, he has his French play, his opera, and what he calls his *lass-mongs*.”

“ *His opera ?* ” — reiterated the horror-struck Mrs. Mopsome, almost spasmodically.

“ Why you see, my dear aunt, our valet is married, and a shocking domestic creature ! ”—replied Mrs. Lewson, settling her shawl,—“ so that on

benefit nights he good-naturedly leaves the disposal of his grace's stall to Beshymell."

The upturned eyes of the maiden lady were fortunately invisible behind her spectacles.

"But what little angel have you got here, my dear aunt?"—resumed the lady of the bedchamber, attracted by the attentions I was paying, (in order to excite hers,) to the point of the varnished shoe. "A genvin King Charles, I pertest, and scarcely bigger than her grace's little treasure Fido!—Her grace is infatyated about dogs of this breed!"—continued she, raising me in her arms, and overpowering even the aroma of sweet marjoram which rendered the air pungent, by her second-rate eau de Cologne, scented with bergamot.—"I really *must* compliment you, my dear ma'am, on so great an acquisition!"

"An animal of no manner of use in this 'versal world would be no acquisition to *me*, Susan!"—replied Mrs. Mopsome,—scarcely knowing how sufficiently to mark her disgust at the flaunting flightiness of the fine lady in whom it was difficult to recognise the little ragged niece she had sent for to town, to place out in life, on her father's

bankruptcy and ejection from his mill.—“ I look upon it as an unchristian thing to waste wholesome bread and meat on beasts that perish, which does nothing in return, and devours the substance that ought to support our fellow-creatures !”

“ My dear aunt, *how* you do talk !” —exclaimed Mrs. Lewson, still fondling me, with one of her mistress’s cast-off attempts at the picturesque. “ Why even her grace, though the littlest eater in three kingdoms, could not live upon what would keep a whole kennel of King Charleses !—And how I *should* like the dear duchess to see this petting !—For, as I said before, it’s nearly as small as Fido, with whom her grace is so infatuated !”

“ Asking your pardon, ma’am, for the liberty of contradicting you,” interrupted the polite Mr. Hill, with a smirk, “ if you allude to the little spaniel which daily accompanies her grace in her hairings in the park, I must say the advantage is on the side of my master’s.”

“ Oh ! it is Mr. *Roper’s* dog, then ?” cried Mrs. Lawson, bridling, with a significant glance at her

demure aunt, "I thought it seemed to have the run of the house."

"The Duchess of Wigmore's, ma'am, I can assure you, is half as big again," resumed my preceptor, not choosing to give up the point.

"I wish I was as sure of a thousand pounds as that you are mistaken," cried the lady in the pink bonnet, holding me at arm's length, as if to take an accurate survey of my dimensions,—“a pictur, certainly,—a perfect pictur,—but not to come up to ourn!—Look at Fido's ears,—look at—I'm sure I wish I'd happened to bring him with me this evening,” said she, interrupting herself. “But her grace is so particular about his going out on foot, more particularly as it has cost us upwards of forty guineas already to get him back from the dog-stealers! So, as I had to call at Madame Louise's about her grace's travelling cloak, and one or two other little calls, I thought it best to leave the poor darling with the chamber-maid.”

“If her grace sets such store by a poor dumb animal,” observed Mrs. Mopsome, sententiously, “I am sure you had better not trust it out of your sight.”

“That is just what I was thinking,” replied her niece, “which makes me regret the more that I did not bring it under my arm; for, poor little fellow! Fido’s as light as a goshymer. Perhaps, sir,” continued she, turning, with an ingratiating smile, towards my chaperon, “some day, when you’re out, you’ll look in upon Mr. Beshymell, and bring your little beauty with you, to afford the duchess a peep.—The steward’s room dines at four, and her grace’s carriage is seldom ordered before five.”

The voluble audacity of this invitation caused the towy “front” of the old spinster—which resembled natural hair much as a child’s wooden doll resembles a woman,—almost to stand on end!—The sedate Mr. Hill was her property; and such an attack upon him seemed to *her* almost as felonious as a footpad’s “stand and deliver!”

But judge, gentle reader, what were *my* sensations as I watched his bow of acquiescent acknowledgment, when you recall to mind that this far-famed idol of the Duchess of Wigmore was no other than the author of my days!—Apprised by my poor mother of the honourable source from



whence I sprang, the dream of my starveling days in Sims's garret had been to behold the noble little animal which she fondly flattered me I resembled ;—nor did the heart of the gallant Don John of Austria beat more wildly on being apprised of his imperial parentage and invited to the presence of his royal brother, than mine, as I listened to the lisping accents of Mistress Lewson ! She no longer appeared affected.—I found no further fault with her Cranbourne Alley eau de Cologne.—She was the angel appointed to conduct me to the bosom of my father !

It did not very much surprise me, considering my improved knowledge of the frailties of the human race, when, on the waiting gentlewoman at length accepting the hints of her maiden aunt that it was getting late,—and that “ the streets wasn't safe or respectable walking for night for unpurTECTED females,” Mr. Hill looked round for his hat, and while she took a bustling leave of her ungracious kinswoman, prepared himself to offer his escort ;—nor that she should mutter something not very intelligible in reply, about “ since he was going her way !”—But when we all three reached the room

door together, I remember looking back and feeling puzzled to decide whether the green eyes of the tabby on four legs, or the tabby on two, surveyed our exit with the more malevolent expression.

“A very worthy ’oman is my poor aunt!” observed the lady in the pink bonnet, after somewhat hesitatingly accepting the opposite arm to that under which I was tucked, so that we formed quite a domestic little party,—“and wonderfully active for her years. She must have laid by something pretty;—for she cannot have been much less than fifty years in service; and my father, who is her only surviving relative, requires me to pay her every respect.—Otherwise, I need not tell you, sir, that she’s quite hout of my horbit. By what you heard her say about the hairy stokocracy, you may understand how infatyatedly she has set her mind, poor old soul! against everything in the spear to which, (I think I may say, Mr. Hill,) that you and I nat’rally belong.”

Poor man! I was afraid it was all up with him when I saw the bewildered glances he cast at the patent leather shoe, and the silken flounces sur-

mounting it;—and now, he was melting away like one of Gunter's ices eaten in an open britszka on the sunny side of Berkeley Square! Before we reached the gates of Wigmore House, a slight whimper on my part had made it apparent that the pressures bestowed by Mr. Hill's right arm, were unconsciously reciprocated by the left. It was nothing to me what he did to Mrs. Lewson,—but *I* had no notion of being squeezed to death.

“Let Mr. Beshymell know that I wish to speak to him in the housekeeper's room,” said she, having readily induced us to “step in.”

“Mr. Béchameil, ma'am, is gone to the opera.”

“That poor man is really as infatuated as her grace!” ejaculated Mrs. Lewson, shrugging her shoulders, as a gentleman standing six feet two in his livery stood aside respectfully to allow a free passage to one who, when the Duchess of Wigmore was out of the house, was the greatest lady *in* it. And with what an air of dignity did she sweep along the passages brilliantly lighted with gas, and containing a whole populace of *marmitons* in paper caps and white aprons—scullions—still-room maids—pantry boys—pages,—all the popu-

lace of the lower regions of a ducal house; in which “spear” Mrs. Lewson and her flounces held the place of an empress.—Colley Cibber’s description of the affectation of George Ann Bellamy is the only thing that approaches it.

Having paraded her guest through the offices, with the view of overwhelming his narrow mind, and completing by her air of distinction the conquest her beauty had begun, she suddenly observed, on reaching the housekeeper’s room, whose varnished presses and well-rubbed mahogany tables shone bright as *marquéterie* in that dazzling light,—that, as her grace did not allow Fido to enter the offices, and there was no one at home, she would bring the dear treasure into the study, to decide the question of comparative size. We were accordingly paraded up stairs again, and introduced into a stately sitting-room; whither, after a few minutes’ pause, Mrs. Lewson returned, with a wax taper in one hand, and in the other the favoured being at sight of whom I stood transfixed and awe-struck,—like Hamlet before his father’s ghost,—unable to wag my tail in token of joy, or fawn at his feet in tender of filial allegiance.

Vain were the attempt to describe the emotions struggling in my mind,—affection, wonder, disappointment! All I had heard from my “infatuated” mother, (as Mrs. Lawson would have called her,) induced me to expect super-canine beauty in my sire;—a skin like the inky cloak of the Prince of Denmark—a form revealing the Apollino of the kennel! But alas! luxury and dissipation had done their worst to destroy the graceful outline,—the sportive mien.—Bloated and peevish, premature infirmity had reduced the gait of old Fido to a waddle, and his shape to aldermanic obesity.—We were alike, “alike,—but oh! how different!”

His first salutation to me was a snarl! Provoked by the sight of my juvenile alertness, his eye kindled like a coal; and reversing the fortunes of Laius and Œdipus, I believe he would have made an end of his own unknown offspring, had gout and asthma permitted! *Vu les circonstances*, the attempts of the old dog at pugnacity were simply ludicrous.

“Well, if it isn’t the most extraor’nary likeness that ever was seen!” cried the lady’s-maid, on beholding us eye each other from the opposite corners

of the Persian carpet. “Every mark and spot wise-wersâ,—that is, I would say *verbatim*. (What she *did* mean to say, I can only surmise !) “The puppy” (it was the only offensive epithet she could apply to me, now that comparison had established my superiority !) “the puppy is exactly like what our beauty must have been five or six years ago ! But Fido is ruined, poor fellow, by over-feeding and want of exercise. And yet, they are so like, that one might take them for brothers.”

Had speech been my portion, I should certainly have exclaimed, like Faulconbridge,

“Oh ! fat old Fido,—father, on my knee,  
I give heav’n thanks that I am not like thee !”

“If you should be our way, sir, some morning about twelve,” continued she ; “I should be particular glad to show Mr. Roper’s dog to her grace. For when poor Fido was lost, nothing that the Duke or any other person in the house could say, would persuade her grace that such another dog was to be had in the world, for love or money.”

Mr. Hill took the hint and his leave with equal readiness, promising to seize an early opportunity of testifying his obedience to her wishes ; and we

departed together from the precincts of Wigmore House;—*his* head running wildly upon the fascinating woman of many furbelows, his rival competitor for the strong box of his future spouse;—*my* thoughts absorbed in doleful consideration of the sad results of a life of clover to one of my species!—If a residence among the hairy stock-oracy was to render my present frisk a hobble,—to make pendent my jowl,—and sow premature wrinkles on my grizzled brow, better the Sims's garret:—

Better the savage Union's iron door,—

Better the slow starvation of the poor !

## CHAPTER VI.

A school wherein the Churchmen teach  
And never practise what they preach,—  
Where Greek and Latin stamp the scholar,  
And fame is reckon'd by the dollar ;  
Where scandal and false inuendo,  
Taint all that women and ev'n men do.  
Where lie the first is peerless reckoned,  
Until thrust out by lie the second.  
Where candour, worth, and thoughts are sleeping,  
While cant is upwards, upwards creeping ;—  
Where age is drivelling,—youth pedantic,—  
Religion frozen or else frantic.  
Where childhood pines, where hunger cries,  
And struggling girlhood sins and dies !

PROCTOR.

THERE were more things dreamed of in my philosophy, and more things dreamed of in my sleep, that night, on my return to our bachelor



lodgings, than had ever vapoured there before ; partly on account of my enlarged views of society ; —partly on account of a handful of stale macaroons with which the waiting gentlewoman had regaled me during my hairy stockoratical visit.

My basket was placed in the drawing-room adjoining Roper's bed-chamber, which, as in most "lodgings for single gentlemen," served him for study, breakfast-room, and hall of audience ; and as I have before observed, my head was often kept aching, by the light of other nights, by which I had been kept waking. I confess I hardly thought his head solid enough for such very hard polishing, —and was afraid it would end with *tutto s'enando in limatura* ; or, in the words of Pliny the younger, that "*Ferrum expoliendo non tam splendescit quam atteritur.*"

Sometimes, on his return from his club or some fashionable party, Roper's pass-key admitted not only himself, but a friend or two ; who regarded a single man's lodgings as a privileged place where cigars might be smoked, and scandals discussed ; and on the night in question, just as a frightful nightmare was bringing upon my chest my great

ancestor Mignon, the courtier of Charles II., who appeared to have been composed out of a four-post bed covered with a parish pall, so vast were his dimensions—so black his skin—while

— What seem'd his head,  
The likeness of a kingly crown had on,—

I was relieved from my fearful visions by a peal of hearty laughter; and a great relief it was to find the reading-lamp bright upon the table; and Roper laughing, not, as was frequently the case, at the recollection of one of his own jokes, but at the disconsolate face of young Sir Seymour Manners, one of the handsomest and pleasantest young men of the day, who had accompanied him home, and was lounging in a corner of his sofa.

The sapphire light of dawn was just penetrating the curtains; and by the *aërophane* shirt-fronts of the two dandies, they seemed to have returned from a ball. From the aspect of the cards ostentatiously stuck into Roper's chimney-glass, I concluded also that it must have been one of the last of the season; and my master's merriment arose apparently from the distracted tone in which the

young baronet alluded to the probability of Lady Jane's immediate departure from town. Who Lady Jane might be, I knew not. But, whether single or double, young and pretty she *certainly* was; or her name would never have been pronounced by Sir Seymour with a sigh so far above concert pitch.

"How *can* you be so absurd, Manners,—I really took you for a more sensible fellow!"—was the unceremonious apostrophe of my master—(for Sir Seymour having no borough interest, demanded no conciliation.) "Make the best of your way to Wiesbaden or Carlsbad; and at the end of a couple of months, you will have forgotten her!"

"You do not know me!—I do not pretend to be a clever fellow.—I abhor bathing places,—at home or abroad; and at the end of two years, as now, shall wake every morning with her name upon my lips—left there by my midnight prayer."

Roper busied himself in a careful examination of his box of havannahs; apparently afraid of not keeping his countenance, if he looked Sir Seymour in the face.

"I was brought up in domestic life. My early

home was a happy one, and I look forward to just such another for the peace of my future days!" —resumed the young lover,—to whose ear the word "spoony," faintly articulated by his companion, was fortunately inaudible; — "and Lady Jane's gentle temper and quiet pursuits, would, I am convinced, render me the happiest of human beings."

"On the contrary," cried Roper, "a *ménage* seldom goes well, that does not unite persons of opposite dispositions. Consider into what extremes the world would fall, if every couple were matched as accurately as a pair of currie horses. The son of such parents as yourself and Lady Jane, would be all cotton and syrup, or become a hermit and circumnavigate the globe in search of a Juan Fernandez for sufficient seclusion — No, no! my dear fellow! Nature requires alteratives.—You would be twice as happy married to some gay, cheerful creature likely to counteract your indolence by bringing pleasant society about you, or accompanying you into the world; and six times as happy," added he, "by not marrying at all!—Matrimony, like flannel and port wine, should be

reserved for the comfort of our declining years.—

*A chaque saison, ses fleurs !*”

Sir Seymour was not so easily argued out of his opinion that youth is the season for enjoying *all* the best blessings of life ; among which, the domestic affections stand pre-eminent.

“ Would you believe,” said he,—(his overcharged heart preferring even an unsympathising confidant to no confidant at all,)—“ that, till to-night, I have been foolishly flattering myself throughout the season, Lady Jane was inclined to like me !—She certainly seemed better pleased to dance with *me* than with Thoresby, or Hamilton, whom her mother always patronised.”

“ No doubt she was !—You are one of the best *valseurs* in town !”

“ *Valseur !*” cried Sir Seymour, with undissembled indignation. “ What an opinion must you have of a girl who could make *that* an object !”

“ An object in a partner at a ball,—which I believe is what we were talking of.”

“ But to-night,” resumed the troubled man, “ to-night, her manner was colder to me than even to Hamilton ;—and when I asked her whether she

was going to Lady Screwy's music to-morrow morning, she scarcely answered !”

“ I saw Croxton introduced to her last night at the Duke's,” said Roper, drily.

“ Croxton?—Do you mean that you think her actuated by interested views?—Do you suppose *that* has altered her ?”

“ I am certain her *mother* is influenced by interested views,” observed Roper,—who, like most unamiable people, was a sworn foe to matrimony, even in the persons of others ; and who was consequently careful not to hint that Sir Seymour's apparent hesitation and vacillation had probably wounded the pride of Lady Jane and her mother, and placed them on their guard against seeming to encourage his attentions.

“ And after all,” resumed he, with an air of candour, “ one really cannot blame her !—In her father's house, Lady Jane commands the enjoyment of forty or fifty thousand a-year.—Her habits and ambitions are proportionate. And to drop down suddenly to an income of little more than five, would be not only trying, but dangerous.”

“ Little more than *three*, till my mother's death,

—which God forbid should soon make me richer!”—said the *really* frank admirer of Lady Jane.

“ Little more than *three* !—And you positively thought of proposing to Lady Wormington’s daughter ?” cried Roper, with well-affected amazement. “ My dear fellow, you must be out of your mind !—I doubt whether the marchioness would hear of a son-in-law with three times the income ! *Three* thousand a year ?—Why Lady Jane’s dress alone would absorb nearly half !—I no longer wonder that, in so worldly a family, they thought it necessary to check your advances.—For after all, you know, even to *refuse* a poor man, is a disadvantage. It lays a girl open at least to the charge of coquetry,—besides encouraging *other* poor men to take the same liberty.”

“ I was afraid it was *that* !”—faltered the simple-hearted Manners.—“ I wish to heaven I had never made their acquaintance.—I wish to heaven I had never seen her face !—But how was I to suppose I should attach myself to her as I have done !—How was I to suppose it would end thus !”

“ Do not talk so confoundedly like a young gentleman in the vulgar thing they call a genteel

comedy,"—cried Roper, with a provoking laugh. "End *thus*?—End *how*?—As far as I can discern, it is ending only with Lady Wormington and her daughter proceeding to Barnsford Castle, as they usually do at the close of the season,—as they did two years ago, after Lady Jane's flirtation with Lord Sark,—as they did last season, after her flirtation with Algy Howarth;—and as they probably will *next* year, after her flirtation with Croxton!"—

Poor Sir Seymour groaned audibly.

"While you, after fretting for a week or so that your stars have better care of you than you deserve, will congratulate yourself at the end of a month that you have been prevented cutting your own throat by a marriage sure to end in misery for all parties," continued Roper.

"If I thought it likely to end in misery for *her*, I should indeed reconcile myself to my disappointment!"—murmured the young lover, with tears in his eyes.

"My dear Manners," rejoined my master, in a more serious tone, as if really grieved to see him so unreasonable,—“be advised by me!—I am some years your senior in years, and centuries in



knowledge of the world. *I* am not a marrying man,—not having even half so much as yourself at my disposal towards giving me a right to render some charming girl unhappy ; and I have consequently examined such questions with dispassionate eyes. Take my word for it that, of all the myriads of women swarming on this earth, there are not ten grains of difference in merit between one and the other !—Renounce a Lady Jane to-day, and to-morrow you will find a Lady Anne, or even a simple Nancy. To break one's heart for this woman or that, is the mere blunder of our rawness. Accident causes us to distinguish some girl or another by the feeling we call love ;—not because she is better suited to us than the rest ;—not even because we think her prettier, or pleasanter, or more amiable ;—but because we have happened to sit next her at dinner,—or met her in a steamboat on the Danube,—or stopped her horse when run away with in the Park ;—or, more likely still, fancied we could discern that her eyes were oftener fixed upon *us* than upon other men. And is all this a reason for tearing one's hair on finding that her eyes are gone in search of another, and that *we* must do ditto?"

“ I have no right to expect you should enter into my feelings,” replied the guest, rising to take his departure, which the growing daylight seemed to render urgent,—yet evidently dreading to be thrown upon himself;—“ but I am persuaded, Roper, that if you knew how wretched I am at this moment, you would not fancy yourself doing me a service by trying to quiz me out of my misery !”

“ Ridiculous blockhead !” —muttered my master, as he re-entered the room where I was lying, after escorting his friend down stairs to let him out of the house with his pass-key;—“ to sit here boring one, at this time of night, with his maudlin namby pamby,—when I have to finish looking over Guizot’s pamphlet before I sleep !—I have promised to send it back to Lady Guelderland the first thing in the morning ; and as I dine there on Thursday, unless I am thoroughly *up* in it, *what* will she think of me !”

Exchanging, therefore, his pumps and dress coat for his dressing-gown and slippers, he pulled down the shade of the reading lamp, and went hard to work !—And like many others who go hard to

work, the first evidence of his industry was an audible snore !

The pamphlet afforded an excellent pretext, however, for being found at breakfast at twelve o'clock the following day, when, in spite of all the endeavours of Hill to prevent it, old General Roper, his uncle, made his way into the room.

“ A parcel to send off to Lady Guelderland which compelled him to wait for his breakfast,” was a cogent excuse.

“ Ay, ay !—if your father had taken my advice, and put you into the Guards,” mumbled the old gentleman, “ you'd have known better than to be missifying on tea and toast at noonday, with a lap-dog for company !”

“ You are well aware, my dear sir,” replied my master, after placing the old general in his easiest chair,—“ that nothing would have delighted me so much as to go into the army, had there been even the remotest prospect of perpetuating the honours already earned by our family in that profession.—But my predecessors gleaned the field of honour too carefully ;—making the British name so terrible, that there is little chance of the

peace of Europe being disturbed again in *my* time!—And I presume you did not fancy that campaigning in St. James's Street, would suffice for the occupation of a spirit so active as mine?"

"As good as nursing puppy-dogs, methinks!" said the testy old gentleman.—"Your father informed me, when I offered to push you at the Horse Guards, that you had a desperate leaning towards public life.—I expected, sir, to see you prime minister by this time!"

"You must have supposed the family consequence of the Ropers strangely increased during the last thirty years, my dear uncle;—since what left you a captain at thirty, is scarcely likely to promote me to the first lordship of the treasury, at twenty-four!"

"Sir, *I* was not a man of genius!—Sir, *I* was not a man of fashion.—Will your great college reputation do nothing for you?—Will your great *friends* do nothing for you?—If half the fine things are to be relied upon which I have heard about you from my poor brother, you are just the sort of rising young gentleman of whom government always keeps a cupboard full, handy, to pop

into parliament when a question requires pushing by speechification."

"You consider me qualified, in short, for a treasury hack?"

"I beg your pardon. A treasury hack is a man of double your years.—The sort of opening to which I point, is an honourable door through which some of the first men of the day have entered into public life."

"I have reason to hope that, before another year is over, I shall be in parliament,"—said Roper,—trusting the old gentleman would let him off without a *very* rigid cross-examination.

"In which case, you will probably find it necessary to give up nursing lap-dogs!"—observed the old soldier, with a sneer.

Aware of the ingratitude of nature of my present proprietor, I longed to certify that such would probably be the case; seeing how great was to be my share in the accomplishment of his ambitions!

"And in order that you may have less excuse for such an employment of your time," added the general, "or at least that you may have some-

thing more decent to take you down to the House than the wretched hack on which I see you lounging in the park, please to remember that you will have credit at Greenwood's for a couple of hundreds a year, in addition to your allowance, from the day you write M. P. after your name."

From a roguish twinkle in the old man's eye, I inferred that he considered this engagement as a postponement to the Greek Kalends. But the promise was of course received with the acknowledgment it *seemed* intended to call forth.

"For fear you should have too long to wait, however," continued General Roper, taking something folded into the shape of a visiting card out of his waistcoat pocket, "here is the first half-year, on account.—Better one note in hand (not *of* hand) than twenty at Greenwood's,—eh!—Mr. Nephew?—But I came here on other business," continued he, so abruptly as to silence the thanks far more eagerly offered on this occasion, than on the last.—"I want to hear how young Howarth is going on.—My friend the Duke is anxious about him. It is hard upon so conscientious a father as he has been,—(riding even his eldest

son with a curb, and keeping him on half rations,) —to have a doting old grandmother make Lord Algernon independent ;—not only to the lad's own ruin,—but to the injury of his brother and sister, by his bad example !”

“ I don't think he sees much of his brother or sister,” said Roper, drily.

“ No—I understand he sees nothing but *you*,—except a few money-lenders, hell-keepers, opera-dancers, and other such respectable classes of the community.”

“ You are severe, my dear uncle !”—said my *pro-temp.* master ; “ *cruelly* severe !”

“ Reason enough,—when I hear my family name mixed up in the most disgraceful manner in his excesses !—You, sir, are supposed to be the person who has led him into all this mischief !”

“ I never saw any one less likely to be led *or* driven, than Algernon Howarth !”—rejoined his nephew.—“ He has the most independent spirit and most obstinate temper with which I am acquainted.”

“ Humph ;—you betray yourself, sir !—You are his bosom friend, after all.—Nothing *but* a bosom

friend attacks a man in this way behind his back !”

“ I do not attack him.—On the contrary, I would do him any good in my power.—I am simply defending myself.”

“ At *his* expense !—It was not, however, your opinion of his character I came to ask.—You are too much of a genius for me to have much confidence in your judgment.—What the duke wants to know, and what I was in hopes you could inform us, was, at a tolerable guess, how many months are still wanting for the poor lad to complete his ruin ?”

“ My dear uncle !”—

“ The duke seems thoroughly aware that Algernon will never be worth troubling his head about, so long as he has a groat left.—But as his family are *really* attached to him”—

“ *Everybody* loves Algy !”

“ They want to know how soon they may calculate on having him restored to them,—*i. e.* how soon his poverty will cause him to be deserted by the hangers-on who infest his company,—gamblers, toadies, and buffoons.”



“I assure you, my dear uncle, that Algernon lives in the very best society!” — interrupted Roper,—somewhat nettled.

“So I have every reason to believe! — Last week, I met his German fellow,—(whom I knew at Houghton when he was one of the Duke of Houghton’s forty thieves,) carrying a puppy, much such a little brute as the one by your side,”—continued the old gentleman, with another roguish twinkle of the eye, “as a present to Vernon’s mistress. An honourable courtship for him, truly; and, as you say, the very *best* society!”—

“I suppose he lives the life of other young men!”—replied Roper, carelessly, while I longed to show my teeth to the insolent old dog who had dared to call me a puppy, and apparently came for the sole purpose of showing us *his*,—though reduced to a single stump.

“Ay, but his father’s son ought to live something better than the life of other young men!”—retorted the general.—“The manliest and most spirited nobleman in the empire ought not to be

disgraced by a fribble covered with frills and chains, the companion of blacklegs and——”

“My dear uncle,”—cried the embryo senator, pushing aside the empty toast-rack,—“Algernon Howarth may exceed the fashion in his dress, but there is not a more manly fellow on the face of the earth!—He has won two steeple-chases.—No man at Melton rides better up to the hounds.—And when he has a match at tennis, people crowd to see it played!”

“And such, sir, are your tests,—and such is your sum total of manliness!”—growled our uncle—“Pretty comfort to carry back to the duke and poor dear little Lady Ellen!—His brother Lord Ulva will not be back from Greece till next spring, or they would have employed *him* to make inquiries.”

“And I am sure I wish they *had*,”—rejoined my master, peevishly;—“for it cannot be expected that *I* should betray him.”

“I do not ask you to split,—I do not require you to turn queen’s evidence. All I ask is the straight-forward question of how much longer Lord

Algernon Howarth will be able to carry on the war?"

My master probably foresaw that his only chance of getting rid of this old man of the mountains, was by a downright answer;—for without further mincing of his words, he replied—"Algy is, alas! on his last legs!—The bill-discounters have long been shy of him!"

"Hurrah!"—cried the old gentleman, seizing his hat so precipitately that I thought he was going to fling it into the air, instead of clapping it on his head to quit the house.

The fact was, that he had not confidence enough in his nephew to acquaint him that his *real* commission from the duke was to ascertain whether the reports which had reached him were true, that his prodigal son was in pecuniary distress, in order that he might come to his aid. For Lord Algernon was the idol of his father's house and heart;—and many things would have been borne and suffered there, rather than that a hair of his head should suffer.

It was in vain that old Roper with his crabbed wisdom suggested that "as he had brewed he

ought to be allowed to bake.” Neither Lady Ellen nor her father could bear that anything but the best French rolls should fall to the batch of their dear Algy!—Algy was a Prince Harry, in whom *they* fondly foresaw a Henry V.!—

## CHAPTER VII.

And now unveil'd the toilet stands display'd,  
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.  
The inferior priestess at the altar's side  
Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride :  
Yon casket India's glowing gems unlocks,  
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.  
The tortoise here and elephant unite,  
Transform'd to combs,—the speckled and the white.  
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,  
Puff, powders, patches, bibles, billets doux !  
Now awful beauty puts on all its arms ;  
The fair each moment rises in her charms ;  
Repairs her smiles,—awakens every grace,—  
And calls forth all the wonders of her face !

POPE.

FROM the nature of the costume assumed the following day by the discreet Mr. Hill, I could have sworn, even had not his jactant gaiety apprized

me of the fact, that we were on our way to the levee of Queen Lewson, in the housekeeper's room of Wigmore House.

Accoutred in a cast-off waistcoat of his master's, which during his sober courtship in Portland Place he had voted "only fit for a play-actor," and in a cravat so garish of hue that I suspect it had its origin in the wardrobe at the Athol, he had so much the air of a quaker *en goguettes*, that I longed to tell him he looked like an ass; for which he would certainly have treated me like a dog !

"Her grace is in a dreadful temper this morning !"—said Mrs. Lewson, on being summoned from her attendance on the duchess, to receive us ; "but perhaps the sight of this little angel may put her into a better humour.—If you will be so obliging as to entrust him to me, Mr. Hill, you will find the morning papers and other periodicals in the steward's room, to amuse you till luncheon time,—when I will have the honour to bring him down to you.—*Anty noo*," continued she, in a more confidential tone,—though we were alone in the house-keeper's room, which by daylight looked nearly as desolate as other menial dungeons,

(though in the damp passages the gas was perforce kept burning throughout the summer day!)—  
“*anty noo*, my dear Mr. Hill, the end of the season is a trying time for ladies’ tempers!—What with bills to be paid——”

“I should have thought Christmas a more vexatious moment on *those* accounts!”—interrupted her visitor, with a grim smile.

“That remark, sir, proves Mr. Roper to be a regular gentleman!”—retorted the lady—shaking her head.—“Lucky those who, in *our* house, receive their Christmas bills at Midsummer!—When sent per post to the Castle, we seldom so much as open them.—Indeed as I know most of the seals and handwritings, (vulgar toads, *so* different from ‘our own correspondents!’) I do not risk annoying her grace by delivering them.—The steward opens the post-bag, and it is *my* business to carry up her grace’s letters.”

“It is a great thing, ma’am, for the Duchess of Wigmore to have a person about her so considerate of her interests!”—replied Mr. Hill, with a bow, profound enough to have done honour to the *corps diplomatique*.

“The only fault of which *I* can accuse her grace,” continued Mrs. Lewson, in the same confidential voice,—“is her *mainya* for encouraging French tradespeople;—the adventurers who come from Paris for the season, and must be paid, because they’re off again like swallows when the season’s over.—What between their tremendous profits and the ready money system, I promise them their triumph won’t last,—that is—among people of fashion!”—added the lady, with a toss of the head, as she took me gently from the side of the variegated waistcoat, (which fondly flattered itself it was not lost upon her,)—and bore me carefully up the back staircase, to a small bed-room on the second floor,—which from the snippets of silk and ribbon on the floor,—a faded Berlin work-basket on the table,—and a certain combination of finery and nastiness,—perfumes and miasma,—I rightly interpreted to be her own.

Scarcely had she opened the door, when she was assailed with the most vehement entreaties and remonstrances by a lady almost finer and nastier than herself,—whose English was broken into still smaller pieces than that of Herr Ernest; and who,



by the neat white handbox edged with blue, standing by her side, I justly concluded to be a French milliner.

“ You vas tell me yesterday, *mademoiselle*, ”—said she—(for France, it appears, does not accord brevet rank to its *femmes de chambre*,—though it styles them as aforesaid “ *femmes*, ”—while *we*, who call them Mrs., designate them as lady’s maids,)—“ you vas tell me, *mademoiselle*, dat if I sall come at midday, you sall enable me to make see to milédi her grease, de littel cap for de contree veiar, vich I was dis moment receif from Paris; and von hour,—near two hour,—I vait—vait—vait—here vid my hands cross,—and not more advance ! ”

“ Since you are in a hurry, Madame La Fleurette, you had better call another day, ”—replied Mrs. Lewson, with a *sangfroid* that formed a curious contrast to the vehement gesticulation of the angry Frenchwoman;—a hint of the most effective nature,—for madame was aware that she had only a few days before her; and having now reached the breastwork of the fortress she meant to attack, if once repulsed anew beyond the circumvallations of Wigmore House, her advantage might never be regained.

For, as the experienced waiting-woman had shrewdly surmised,—“de littel cap for de contree veear,”—was a mere *ruse de guerre* to secure an opportunity of presenting at her grace’s breast that fearful implement of destruction—a bill;—which the French call a *mémoire*, as being the thing of all others people are most likely to forget.

While Madame La Fleurette was re-settling herself in the chair from which she had risen, muttering something about her desire to *oblige* “milédi her grease by vaiting her time,”—Mrs. Lewson turned with the air of a patroness of Almacks towards the other expectant;—a tall slender English girl, with long fair ringlets and lips blue with affright from finding herself in presence of the great lady’s great woman;—who so little knew how to disguise *her* nefarious purpose, that she held right in front of her neatly-pinned shawl, a long narrow paper, (with nearly as many sheets as a man of war,) bearing in its “*complement extern*” the word “BILL” as legibly inscribed, as if about to be presented in parliament by a country member.

“My dear Miss Mason, I am really afraid I can do nothing for you to-day,” said Mrs. Lewson, with

the blandest affability.—“I am truly concerned, my dear, you should have had the trouble of calling so often ; and every time I have promised you should see her grace, it has been my expectation to procure you an audience.—But you must have perceived from what Monsieur L'Ecorcheur said, after leaving the duchess just now, that she is not disposed to be interrupted this morning.”

“But Monsieur L'Ecorcheur, ma'am, was all the same settled with,”—answered the girl, in a tremulous voice,—“and I should not mind any thing harsh her grace might be pleased to say to me,”—continued she, though from her terrified air, I am convinced that the sudden flitting of a feather would have made her faint,—“if she would only give me something on account. My mother is in great difficulties ; and it was promised that the bill, which has been three years owing, should be paid before her grace left town last year.”

There were tears in her eyes,—yes ! on the word of an honest little dog, there were tears in her eyes as she pronounced the words. Yet in reply, the waiting woman presumed to call her impertinent !

“It is no use arguing about it, child,” said she.

“I can only tell *you* as I told your mother last year, that if her grace chooses to pay the bill, she *will*, without being tormented ; and if inconvenient, she won’t,—call here as often as you please. And by the by, why does not your mother call herself?”

“I mentioned to you before, ma’am, that she has been confined to her bed these two months ; and that we were looking to the payment of this bill for the means of procuring her advice and change of air,” uttered the girl, gaining a little courage, however, when she spoke of her mother.

“I can’t help what you were *looking to*?” said the abigail, evidently trying to brazen out a certain sense of discomposure.—“All I can tell you is, and I know something of the world, that when folks that is ill is *really* ill, all the physic and travelling about in the world, won’t cure them.”

On hearing which, though probably more shocked by the hardness of the waiting woman’s manner than the lucidity of her arguments,—the poor girl burst into tears.

“Now really, my dear Miss Mason, I cannot have you crying, and sobbing here !”—resumed

Mrs. Lewson—exceedingly annoyed that the gossiping Madame La Fleurette should witness such a scene.—“I am now going to her grace, on particular business; and if you will leave me your account, I will take an opportunity of mentioning it to her, and you may call to-morrow at twelve. If you choose to give me the cap, I will take it at the same time to her grace,”—added she, turning to the modiste,—after snatching the unsightly paper from the English girl.—“But if not, *you* also, madame, must come to-morrow. For the duchess’s dressing-time is arrived,” continued she, looking affectedly at a little French watch which she took out of her bosom, “after which,—as you well know,—her grace receives no tradespeople,—not if it were the Pope of Rome.”

At this announcement, Madame La Fleurette snatched up her bandbox with an air of irrepressible indignation, announcing that Monsieur La Fleurette (a problematical personage to whom she only alluded on extreme occasions) would “have de honour to let milédi her grace hear from him!” And as Mrs. Lewson was holding the door open, with an air of overstrained politeness that plainly said “get

out," her two reluctant victims were forced to comply. While they slowly descended the back stairs, she locked the door of the room with one hand, retaining me somewhat gripingly in the other; and, tripping across the bare landing-place which separated the serviceable from the hairy-stockoratical portion of the house, arrived at a corridor so richly carpeted, that "the blind mole heard not a foot fall." Throwing open a door covered with red baize, beside which stood a Gothic *jardinière* filled with the most fragrant exotics, we knocked at another, of highly varnished mahogany; when I found we were approaching the august presence of the Duchess of Wigmore.—A night-bolt having been instantly drawn within the mysterious blue chamber, we were bidden to "come in," in accents that sounded very much like the sawing of a plank.

But even when we had crossed the threshold of that luxurious dressing-room, it was difficult for me to persuade myself that the thing seated before the splendid looking-glass, adoring

With head uncovered the cosmetic powers,

could be really "Milédi her grease;" whom I had

often seen in the park, enveloped in a fleecy cloud of blonde or Brussels lace;—her black ringlets symmetrically adapted to her face, to which the most becoming pink bonnets manufactured by Barenne usually united with the palest blushes of Houbigant, to impart the gentle bloom of youth.

Of the round bare head before me, on the contrary, the scanty locks were of “a sable silvered;”—while the absence of the grape-like ringlets which lay hard by, disposed upon a pair of side combs on the lid of a small box,—betrayed to view a brow of yellow parchment, intersected by lines as if ruled for a gamut.—The harsh features displayed in profile, might have been those of a Prussian dragoon, for any resemblance they bore to the softer sex. Nothing could be less feminine, whether in outline, countenance, or complexion !

“I thought you were never coming, Lewson,” cried *it*, in a peevish voice.—“It is too late now for you to dye my hair to-day.—But it has not been done since Thursday, and is frightfully out of order ; so you must rub in a little black pomatum.”

“I can assure your grace that I should have

hurried up, the moment I heard the bell; only I was beset by that extortionating Madam La Fleurette and a whole legion of cormorants of her description; who seem terribly afraid of letting your grace leave town without reminding us of their troublesome existence."

"Well, don't bore me about them *now*,—for I am in a hurry to dress, and have waited long enough already. I have half a dozen appointments this morning, for which, as it is, I shall be too late!—What could induce you to let in that troublesome person, L'Ecorcheur?"

"He told me he started for Paris to-morrow morning; and as your grace was entirely out of Eau de Ninon—"

"No matter!—His bill is paid; and now, I have not a guinea left, let who will come to torment me. Besides which, his extravagant charges have put me out of sorts for the remainder of the day!"

"I think I have something to show your grace that will make my peace,"—wheedled Mrs. Lewson, as she unrolled, with a simpering air, the black silk apron in which she had enfolded me, 'on



entering,—in order to produce what she called “an interesting denewment.”

The surprise, however, was anything but agreeable to *me*!—For the moment I was uncovered, and just as the duchess, in an altered voice, was beginning to indulge in ejaculations of “Ah! the little darling!—Oh! the little pet!—the perfect gem!”—the savage little brute, lying on a silken cushion at her feet, upstarted from his slumbers.

Alas!—No *στοργή*—no instinct of natural affection warned him that he beheld his son!—But in a fit of frantic jealousy, he assailed me with a ferocious attack that served only too painfully to indicate from which of his parents my surly brother inherited his bark and bite!—

“Is it for sale?—I am afraid they ask a fortune for it!”—cried the duchess, (after having chastised her peevish and unwieldy pet into silence by a whiff of her embroidered pocket-handkerchief,) “If that odious L’Ecorcheur had not been admitted, I would certainly have bought it!”

“It is *not* for sale;—or knowing your grace to be out of ready money, I should not have

brought it to tantalize you,”—replied Mrs. Lewson. “The dog belongs to Mr. Roper.”

“What Roper? — One of the Cumberland people?”

“I thought your grace might remember him. We had him down one year at the Castle.”

“Some hunting man, then, I suppose.—I dare say you mean a tall, good-looking Mr. Roper, whom they call Lord Algernon Howarth’s worse-half?”

“Mr. Roper *is* a friend, I rather think, of Lord Algernon.—His confidential servant is going to marry a rich aunt of mine whom I have sometimes taken the liberty of mentioning to your grace,—which is how I came by a sight of the little beauty; and I think your grace will allow that the little creature is as like poor Fido as ——”

“A most astonishing likeness, certainly!”—exclaimed the Duchess, on whose knees I was now installed; while the *soubrette*, as if endeavouring to produce a copy of my lustrous, jet-black head, smoothed down with dextrous hand the upstarting gray hairs on her grace’s unsightly poll, with a

stick of black pomatum, that looked like questionable chocolate.

“And now, Fido is getting so infirm that he cannot last long, what would I not give to have this little love!—What is its name?”

“Rattle, my lady.”

“Rattle, Rattle!—Yes! he answers perfectly!—What ears,—what eyes,—and as lively and sprightly as he is handsome!”—

“I was sure your grace would be charmed with him.”

“He is certainly smaller, Lewson, than Lady Surcingle’s Chloe, of which she is so proud, and which goes into her reticule?”—

“I should think Rattle would go into a full-sized purse,—if your grace has one empty at hand.”—

“Empty enough!”—exclaimed the duchess,—to whom purses must have been just then a tender subject:—“but I shall not tantalize myself by trying.—If the little treasure is not to be had, why convince myself of his merits?”—

“I only informed your grace that he was not on *sale*. But many things that are not to be had for money, my lady, are to be had for love.”

“For *love*?”—said the Duchess of Wigmore, drawing up her monstrous ugliness with an air of offended dignity, that rendered her still more like a Gorgon, or a *Rittmeister*. “I really do not understand you, Lewson.—I scarcely know this Mr. Roper by sight.”

“I thought, perhaps, your grace might be aware for whom poor Rattle was intended,” replied Mrs. Lewson,—biting her lips, lest the duchess should perceive how much she was amused by so gratuitous an assumption of prudery.—“Your grace, who hears so much more than I do of the scandalous chronicle—”

“The dog is intended, then, for a *cadeau* to some lady?” cried the duchess, more and more interested.

“I presume so, my lady. Rattle is clearly not a gentleman’s dog.—If it had been a Newfoundland, indeed,—a pointer,—or even a terrier—”

“But to whom is it to be given?”—demanded the duchess, impatiently interrupting her rigmarole.—“To Lady Ellen Howarth, perhaps,—since he is so intimate with her brother?”

“Your grace knows best.—But I don’t think Mr. Roper *exactly* a marrying man, which is the

only pretence for single gentlemen making presents to single ladies.—What does your grace say to Lady Glengaff?”

“ Lady Glengaff?— Why she is old enough to be my mother !”—cried the duchess,—(who was exactly three years her senior.)

“ That is precisely what I said, my lady ! To waste such a dog on such a cat !”

“ Lewson ! you forget yourself !—And you will wear a hole in my head if you lean so hard !”—exclaimed “ Milédi, her grease,” indignant at hearing a *quasi* contemporary thus disparagingly spoken of.—Nevertheless she herself added, in a lower voice, a few moments afterwards,—“ What in the world *can* he want from Lady Glengaff !”—

I trust it will be understood that all this time I was doing my little utmost to ingratiate myself with the duchess.—Not because the dressing gown on which I rested was of the finest cambric,—not because the hand that caressed me was covered with the most costly rings,—for the skinniness of the hand struck me far more than the beauty of the rings ; and as to the embroidered cambric, I should have preferred the knee of Mrs. Vernon,

in simple fustian.—But I longed to show my grudging sire that I was not a dog to be sneezed at!—Kings, it is well known, are apt to be jealous of their successors; and Philip II. and Peter the Great are not the only unnatural parents who have figured upon a throne. But parents who figure on a cushion, ought to know better.

“ I shall see Mr. Roper this morning at Campden Hill, in all probability; and will take care to let him know what I think of his dog.—So give me Madame La Fleurette’s last bonnet, Lewson,—the one with the blonde veil and briar roses;—the muslin pelisse, lined with pink;—and guipure parasol, with the mother of pearl handle. It would be hard, indeed, if one had less influence than such a creature as Lady Glengaff.”

And while Mrs. Lewson proceeded to fasten the ringlets to the bare temples of her grace, *I* hastened to lick her hand with such ardour of gratitude, as called forth in return the most vociferous terms of endearment. On which, the gouty old gentleman, at our feet, gave vent to his surly jealousy in a thrilling growl!—

Gentle reader, you have heard of the rapid pro-

gress of an American spring ; or, even in England, may have watched, after a prolonged winter, the sudden clothing of the earth with verdure,—the trees with blossoms?—

Exactly such was the transformation of the duchess, as the labours of her toilet proceeded !—I beheld the loves and graces successively plastered upon her cheeks from rouge-pots, powder-boxes, and vials of cosmetics ; and watched her progressively acquire the fragrant breath, the roseate blush, the pearly whiteness, the tendril-like locks, the coral lips, the ivory teeth, which were to render her bewitching for the day !—With every fresh application from the dressing-box, “ *it* ” became five years younger ; till at length there sat before me a lovely maiden of eighteen !—To complete the personation there required only a command of that variable complexion, or a gush of those human tears, which I had seen extorted from the sensibility of the poor blushing, weeping Lucy Mason !—

Honours, however, did not change manners.—The younger she grew, (to her credit be it spoken,) the greater her sympathy with poor little Rattle !

—For in that luxurious chamber I had found a congenial atmosphere.—My imagination had long been on the *tapis* of just such a Tournay carpet as now extended its soft and flowery garlands under my paws.—And no sooner did I perceive that my sullen sire, who lay upon his cushion as solemn as a chancellor on his woolsack, was indulging in low growls *en sourdine* as he surveyed my gambols, than I capered about the room with the grace and agility of Perrot;—throwing somersaults into the air, and causing my wavy coat and silken ears to stream like a meteor, as I executed my aërial evolutions.

“That dog is a positive angel!”—cried the duchess,—after watching me in rapturous silence, as she was accustomed to do Carlotta Grisi from her opera-box.

“I was sure your grace would lose your heart to him!”—responded Lewson, whose face was now scarlet, from the effort of bringing together the hooks and eyes, whose junction was to convert “it” into a sylph.

“If I had not promised to chaperon my niece, Lady Jane, to the breakfast, (because she fancies



Sir Seymour Manners so afraid of her mother as to prevent him from proposing,) I would positively stay at home for the pleasure of watching the little creature play!—With all my experience of lap-dogs, never did I see so perfect a creature!”

I trust the reader does me the justice to believe that, at *that* moment, the Duchess of Wigmore appeared to me little more than *fifteen*!—Seeing was *not* believing!—*My* convictions arose from auricular demonstration.

## CHAPTER VIII.

. . . J'ai faim !—il faut de l'or,  
De l'or !—La vie est là !—De l'or—toujours,—encore !  
Les nobles ont des champs, des campagnes fertiles,—  
Les grands ont des palais, et les rois ont des villes ;  
A moi, pas un tilleul,—un brin de gazon vert,—  
Pour reposer mon corps,—pour me mettre à couvert.

CAUSSADE.

AWARE that his master had made arrangements to proceed to the breakfast, at Campden Hill, with Lord Algernon,—(for Roper was as chary in the use of his horse as Hill in attendance on it, who had a sub or scrub in his pay in the adjoining mews,)—aware, I say, that he was not wanted at home, my master of the ceremonies dawdled over his cold fowl and ham, washed down by sherry

and port, at the luncheon-table of the stewards' room at Wigmore House, till himself and Mrs. Lewson were the only persons remaining.

At length, I conclude, even *she* thought she had seen enough of the harlequin waistcoat; for she proceeded so far as to hint at "commissions to execute for the duchess, which compelled us to say good-bye."

As town was now what is called empty,—nothing being left but the picture cards of the pack, *i. e.* a few lords and ladies above being molested by the heat of the weather, so long as they could be iced every night by Gunter, and monopolise every afternoon the rippling coolness of the Serpentine, by establishing their britzkas and phaetons in phalanx along the shore,—Mr. Hill no longer considered it necessary to my safety to press me close to his heart, even in the less frequented streets; and I fulfilled his purpose and my own by taking care to "follow on," as careful as if I had done nothing all my life but listen to the hunting chorus in the Freischutz;—even when, as on the day in question, he encountered a brother brush,

with whom to enjoy the interchange of social converse, without further thought of poor Rattle.

I knew the first duty of a dog to be passive obedience; and I also knew that the diet of dog-stealers is a diet of scraps; and would as soon have been sentenced at once to the diet of worms.

I was following Mr. Hill, therefore, with an obsequious submission, worthy of a junior lord of the treasury treading in the steps of the premier, regardless of Maynooth grants or holes in the pavement,—when, on seeing him accosted in a whining tone by a ragged beggar-boy, I thought to take upon myself the airs of bigger dogs, and set up a bark in his defence; such as, in the case aforesaid, must have endowed the junior lord with a double claim on the treasury loaves and fishes. For was it not enough to make one bark oneself into bits, to see that a man who had been feeding on the crumbs of a ducal table, was not secure against the impertinent intrusion of the lower orders?—

But no sooner had I reached the little dirty

urchin, with the intention of ascertaining whether the calf of his leg were as tender as the drumstick of the Duke of Wigmore's chicken, than, instead of flying at his leg, I jumped into his arms !

It was Jem,—my own Jem,—the Jem of my heart,—tattered and torn,—beaten and hungry ;—wandering about the streets to see whether any charitable Christian could be induced to afford him a day's longer respite from a jump off Westminster Bridge into the jaws of death, as ravenous as his own.

His hunger was forgotten, however, in the joy of seeing me again ;—and, in the delight of the moment, down he sat upon a doorstep, fondling me in his ragged arms, and crying over me, as though conscious that tears were all he had to offer !

Not a soul was in sight.—The Two Gentlemen of Gammona, Mr. Hill and Herr Ernest, were proceeding leisurely onwards, with the intention of entering Lansdowne Passage, on their way to the Athol ;—so absorbed in mutual abuse of their

respective masters, that the Duke of Wellington might have passed them without exciting their notice;—and had poor Jem been afflicted with the same cerebral organization as his father, there was not the slightest obstacle to his darting up Bolton Street, or Half Moon Street, with my little person hid under his jacket.

Instead of entertaining any such nefarious intentions, however, the poor fellow, after looking round him in search of my actual proprietor, whoever he might be, or the open door out of which I might possibly have strayed, (and that of Mrs. Vernon, though shut as close as a poor's-box, was near at hand,) he espied the two gentlemen's gentlemen proceeding leisurely in the distance; who, by their gesticulations, he doubtless mistook for two members of parliament on their way to the house,—rehearsing the evening's debate. Gathering up his tatters with one hand, therefore, while securing me more carefully with the other, he instantly scuffled off, with the view of overtaking them.

“Please gentlemen,”—said he, as articulately

as scantness of breath would allow,—when we reached them, half-way through the passage, already, alas! plentifully sprinkled with the sere leaves of the white poplar trees, announcing that summer was over,—“please gentlemen, — have either of you lost a dog?”

“*Lost* a dog, you little impudent vagabond!” cried Mr. Hill,—turning suddenly round, with a face containing two glasses of port and three of sherry;—“set it down this very minute! How dare you touch property what does not belong to you, and with such dirty fingers!”

“You shall do your duty, mein dear friend, to give him in charge to de police!” said Herr Ernest, knitting his brows into a thousand hieroglyphics.

“Please gentlemen, I’ve know’d this here dog from a pup!”—pleaded Jem,—who considering his case alarming, already began to tremble.

“*You* ’ve known Lord Algernon How’rth’s dog?” demanded Mr. Hill.—“*You*!—Why you’re the most owdacious little liar I ever come across; and no doubt a thief into the bargain!”

“ Rattle, Rattle !” cried Jem,—in order to afford evidence of his veracity.—And in a moment, I leapt upon him, with a thousand passionate indications of attachment which would have carried conviction to the mind of King Solomon, or Haroun Al Raschid,—but which only served to irritate the two valets—a name only too appropriately done into Whistonian English by two Knaves.

“ Let *that* teach you, sirrah, how you meddle another time with a gentleman’s dog !”—cried Mr. Hill,—having looked round to ascertain that no policeman was on the watch, before he applied a smart cut of his cane across the poor boy’s shoulders; who, though he writhed silently under the anguish of the blow, scorned to waste upon the sense of his injuries one of those precious tears which constituted the dew of his heart.

Poor Jem !—I doubt whether he perceived the wistful glance I cast back upon him when caught up under the arm of the fiery Mr. Hill; or heard the feeble whine whereby I strove to manifest my sympathy in his wrongs !—Who—who knew better



than myself how long an amount of compensation Fate was in arrear with poor Jem Sims !

After the disturbance I had undergone the preceding night, it will readily be believed that I was glad to sleep away the remainder of the day in the snug bed in which I was deposited by the muddle-headed Hill, while he and his companion proceeded to their day's diversions; their masters being safe till evening at Campden Hill.—Methought I heard something about “ roulette !” But I *may* have been mistaken, and as character is a precious thing, as some judge unaddicted to the black cap, would say to a jury—“ it is our duty to give them the benefit of the doubt !”

Thanks to this pleasant siesta, I found myself wide awake, to welcome home Mr. Roper at night;—when roused from my slumbers by the tingling fumes of three cigars, and the chatter of a couple of walking members, whom he was accustomed to bring home occasionally; either of whom might have borne my name of Rattle quite as appropriately as myself.

One of them, the Honourable Exceptionatus

Blank, was member for a borough which has belonged to his family longer than the throne of England to the House of Guelph. The other, Mr. Rodomont Bragge, had knocked at every door of parliament for the space of half a dozen years; till one fine day, profiting by the confusion created by a sudden death, he galloped down to Spoonhurst; and between jest and earnest, secured the corporation, while the man they believed to be their sitting member was lying dead in St. George's Hospital, whither he had been carried on a stretcher, after a fall in the park!

Having made his way into the house by the wicket-gate thus accidentally left open, and accomplished his purpose by "doing things quietly," he manifested his satisfaction on the occasion by taking care to be plentifully heard of afterwards.

Exceptionatus, on the other hand, though he never lifted up his voice as a senator, save in the lobby, was regarded by his party as a far more valuable supporter. For even the proverbial unconvincedness of parliament has become aware that, whereas the hundred insignificant, well-

matched legs of a centipede, carry it onward at a brisker pace than the huge claws of a lobster which are always busy in nipping its prey by the road instead of making progress the chief object, a dozen unpretending, active, steady-going adherents whose *yea* is *ay*, and *nay* no, are a thousand times more serviceable than one Sir Oracle, by whose *ipse dixit* a party is perpetually committed.

No class of men more apt to talk *shop* when no longer behind the counter, than the parliamentary ! Less aware than myself of the quantity of midnight oil burnt by poor Roper, with the view of becoming the Canning of the new era, the M. P.s might just as well have respected the truce of a Wednesday night, and forborne to badger each other under his ex-parliamentary roof, by hacking with the blunt and jagged-edged weapon of party-pleasantry ; which, however well it serve to maim and disfigure, never yet left a champion on the field.

It is true that Roper endeavoured with all his might to aggravate their spite, and seemed mightily amused with their sparring.—But I sus-

pect it was from knowing that, badly as they talked politics, it was the only subject on which they could talk at all. He ought, however, to have had some consideration for *me*!—For it was a very misleading thing to the political opinions of a little dog to hear a red-hot Tory, like Exceptionatus, broach the subject of impeaching Sir Robert Peel; or a Radical, like Rodomont Bragge, defend, with all the brazen strength of his lungs and impudence, the liberal and enlightened measures of the Tory administration.

“An out-and-outer like myself,” cried he,—“has no alternative but to support a Conservative Government, as the only chance of getting our measures carried!”

“I don’t know what you mean, Bragge, by calling yourself an out-and-outer,” — drawled the gentle dulness of Exceptionatus;—“except that you’re always *out* in your arguments and likely to remain *out* of place. — But it strikes me that during those unsuccessful contests of yours, I saw you in succession High, Low, Jack, and the Game,—eh?—You canvassed our people

to get in for Westminster; and my cousin, Lord Dribbledown, declares you promised to support the Corn Laws, the Slave Trade, and a new Test Act, if he would bring you in for Drowseford!"

"That is exactly what I call being an out-and-outer!"—replied Bragge, with the countenance of an Old Bailey barrister in training for the rope walk;—"I was content to make my entry into Troy, even in the belly of a wooden horse, so that in the sequel the Greeks became triumphant!—You don't show your colours to your friends, but to the foe.—The moment I had to deal with such fellows as you, Cep, I took care to let them know on which side I was fighting!"

"Well—you see I learnt it, and survived it!" replied the "hairy stockoratical" member. "The only thing I don't understand is how our party manage to keep in, now you have taken to supporting our measures!"

"You forget, my dear fellow, the ballast ensured by such a head as yours!—The Tories consider themselves,

By its great weight, made stedfast and immoveable."

“Let me advise you, then, my dear Bragge, to pin *your* opinions to my head:—it might keep them from wavering!” retorted Cep. “At present, they oscillate with every wind, like a body that had just paid the utmost penalty of the law.”

“*That* must rather resemble *you*, my dear Cep,—since every one knows the only debt *you* are likely to pay, is the debt of nature!”

“Never mind,—my *party* will pay off the national debt!” replied Exceptionatus, good-humouredly;—“and so long as the national Exchequer goes right, what signifies mine?”—

“Wait till next session before you boast on that score!”—retorted Bragge.—“The gap in the next quarter’s revenue will bring you to your senses, such as they are;—and if there should be a dissolution”—

“There will be *no* dissolution!” retorted Exceptionatus, in a decided tone. On which, my master threw into the fire-place the better half of a glorious havannah that exactly matched the golden tan of my complexion, and thought it worth while to listen.

“ I am sorry to hear it !—The task of hacking a creature to pieces so terribly tenacious of life as the present government, is hard work for even the most lukewarm friend of humanity !”—rejoined Rodomont Bragge. “ I was in hopes its writhings were almost at an end. However, if they don’t dissolve, I shall try the German spas, and get up my strength again before winter.”

“ The more necessary, because one of your choicest allies is going to desert you,” retorted Cep, with a curl of the lip.

“ Rather a curious moment to *rat* !” observed Roper,—shrugging his shoulders.

“ I said nothing about ratting.—I alluded to a man we would not accept of you if you threw us something handsome into the bargain !—But he will be a loss to Bragge.

“ *Who* will be a loss to Bragge ?”

“ Horsfall !”

“ God bless my soul !—I saw him perfectly well yesterday morning ?”—

“ Horsfall *dead* ?”—cried Rodomont Bragge.

“ Nearly as bad.—He has succeeded to a

peerage that brings him nothing but a title: and we all know that it costs a man some thousands a year to be called my lord !”

“ Horsfall,—(or Lord Hardenbrass I suppose one must learn to call him *now* !) will never do for the Upper House !” said Bragge, musingly.—“ He will be forced to tie his legs, like Light-foot in Fortunio, that he may not run faster than the game !”

“ If he went on at his old rate, he would certainly be thought a fussy, officious, vulgar fellow !”—cried Exceptionatus, with indignation.

“ Most reformers pass for fussy and officious,”—retorted Bragge.

“ Surely Horsfall was brought into parliament by the Duke of Wigmore ?” inquired my master, with apparent unconcern.

“ Yes !—for Grubridge.—The late Lord Hardenbrass, his cousin, was married to the Duke’s sister.”

“ I wonder the duchess should have gone to the breakfast this morning ?” said Roper, gravely.

“ I dare say she knew nothing about the mat-



ter; and if she *had*, probably would not have cared a rush, except for the bore of having to moult her pink feathers and go into mourning in the dog days. *I* happened to hear of it," added Exceptionatus, "because Lady Glengaff's back window looks straight into Lord Hardenbrass's house in Hill Street; and I observed the shutters closed this morning."

"And what were you doing at Lady Glengaff's? Is it for her, after all, you threw over poor Lady Maria Semiton?"

"A man may not marry his grandmother," pleaded Cep, "still less may he fall in love with her!—My business at her house was to escape a hot ride to Campden Hill.—She took me to the breakfast."—

My master was not listening. He was not even pretending to listen.—He was literally so regardless of the decencies of society as to be winding up his watch;—a hint to adjourn the meeting, scarcely to be overlooked.—So absorbed, indeed, was he in the task, as apparently to lose all interest in the desultory chat of his companions;

for when, two minutes afterwards, Exceptionatus, who had been squabbling with Bragge concerning Lady Jane Barnsford's complexion, appealed to him whether he did not think she looked remarkably well in lilac, he replied with a look of bewilderment—"but this morning, surely she wore a pelisse?"—

His two guests burst into a shout of laughter; one of them accusing him of having suddenly gone blind,—the other of being desperately in love!—

The little dog was the only person present who understood him!—*I* knew that he was thinking of the Duchess of Wigmore. And, moreover, I knew *why*!—

He *was* thinking of the Duchess of Wigmore; and he was thinking how thankful he should be when the two chatter-boxes took their departure, in order that he might sit down and write her a letter!—

But it suffices to entertain a similar wish for the guest who is *de trop*, to take root in the house!—Though Exceptionatus set no bounds to his yawns, he seemed equally disposed to set no

bounds to his visit.—Scarcely a reputation left in town but was the worse for the ensuing half hour;—merely because two idle men, who had nothing to say, were too inert to extricate themselves from their lounging chairs, for the effort of going home to bed!—

“At last!”—was the heartfelt ejaculation of the impatient host, when he had closed the door upon them.—Nor did it the least surprise me to see him instantly repair to his writing-table, and seize a new quire of the finest wirewove, and a pen which he held to the lamp to ascertain that its nib was unimpeachable, ere he opened his fire.

But having proceeded thus far in his task,—drawn his chair closer to the table,—screwed up the lamp to brighter lustre,—and placed the blotting-book squarely and commodiously before him, instead of putting pen to paper, he laid it quietly down again, and fell into a fit of musing.

There are two reasons which induce a man to pause when about to write a letter;—either that he finds he has nothing to say,—or finds he has

too much.—Roper suspended his measures, because in the latter quandary ;—apprehensive that his meaning might become as apparent to the Duchess of Wigmores, as it was to himself !—

Convinced, however, like the great Talleyrand, that the use of language is to conceal our thoughts, he set about cogitating on the most sinuous and plausible disposition of his words to express—“ the dog is yours ;”—as an envelope for the phrase, which purported by hook or by crook to obtain in reply—“ and *yours* the representation of Grubridge !”

But by what possible process of syncopation to concentrate the thing within the narrow compass of a sheet of note paper, was puzzling, even to a man so versed in minor tactics and manœuvrings, as my friend Roper. Neither ancient nor modern literature afforded him a precedent.—In such an emergency, Tacitus might have become diffuse.—In such an emergency, Sir Robert Walpole or Sir Robert Peel would be at fault !—

All that morning, the duchess had beset him with a vehemence of courtship almost alarming.—

My master,—(I blush to own him, but it was not in my power to give him warning!)—my master was not a ladies' man.—Roper looked upon women as a means, and not as an end;—and I am convinced that Hecate, having the patronage of a borough, would have not only withdrawn his attentions but his affections from a grace or a muse,—a Venus or a Mary Vernon. Emitting at every pore the effluvium of that *vanitas speciocissima* which public men call ambition, he had as little leisure for the attractions of black, brown, or fair, as a fox-hunter to admire a pretty face in the heat of a good run.

When, therefore, he found a woman who, though old and ugly, advertised herself by her ringlets and pink pelisse as pretty and young, looking delightfully at him with all her might, and giving utterance to the little sentimental nothings which, when uttered in a certain tone under an acacia tree in bloom, become either *worse* than nothings or the music of the spheres,—he longed to tell her that she was under a mistake,—that she had knocked at the wrong door,—that it was his friend

Lord Algernon Howarth, and not himself, who was the *homme à bonnes fortunes*.—

Still, as a well-bred man, it was his duty to submit to any amount of amiability her grace might be pleased to inflict upon him; and he consequently submitted to be drawn to the opposite corner of the gardens from that in which Lady Glengaff,—(at that moment the object of his designing idolatry,)—was holding her court;—and to carry about the guipure parasol with a mother-of-pearl handle, as reverentially as though it were the freedom of the city of London contained in a gold box.

The Duchess of Wigmores, meanwhile, was wasting as much art upon him as might have smoothed over a Tahiti Question, or conciliated the Oregon dilemma!—For it is amazing at how immense a distance from the question nearest her heart, a woman commences her plan of attack;—like a spider who, to entrap the fly flitting on the window-pane, attaches her first filament to the ceiling.—

Instead of making the smallest allusion to spa-

niels in general, or King Charleses in particular, she began reminding him of the pleasant Christmas party at Barnsford Castle, where their acquaintance had commenced, four winters before ; and how good-naturedly he had copied into her album some inedited stanzas of Lady Caroline Lamb's, and how kindly he had tried to teach her to skate ; forbearing, of course, to add how offensively forward she had thought him !

Smiling and acquiescent, poor Mr. Roper could not but recall to mind that those assiduities were the result of a preconcerted plan between himself, Algy Howarth, and one or two Ch. Ch. men who were of the party, to make a fool of the frisky old duchess ;—so that their scorn had been at least reciprocal. And as he had not the honour to be on the private list of Wigmore House,—had never dined there, or even entered the gates except on occasion of balls and other festive mobs,—he did not see why he was called upon to submit to her grace's attentions, merely because town was getting empty.

At length (à propos to a beautiful marble copy

of the *Diane Chasseresse* which adorned one of the *bosquets* into which her wanderings misguided him) she went off into a fit of spasmodic ecstasies concerning the greyhound crouching at the feet of the goddess.

She confessed that, *like* Diana, (!) she had a weakness for dogs,—(to which Roper mentally added, “and puppies.”) She was ashamed to own how fondly she was attached to a little pet given her some years ago by the duke,—now, alas! getting old and infirm, poor fellow!—And sometimes, when she was nervous and out of spirits, she could not help looking forward with fear and trembling to the time when, in the course of nature, she must submit to dispense with his society.

“The Duke of Wigmore’s?”—demanded her companion, in an absent manner,—half afraid that she was going to make him a conditional offer of her hand.

“No, no!—the dear little King Charles she had been talking about,—the greatest beauty that ever was seen;—not larger than a kitten, with ears that



swept the ground!—There was not such another in England!”

“I think I could show you its match!”—said Roper, with a self-sufficient smile,—falling into the trap as readily as though he were doing it to amuse an audience.

“Do not flatter yourself!”—rejoined the duchess, with a look of archness much less genuine.—“*My* poor little darling is certainly unique!”

“All I ask of your grace is, to suspend your verdict till you have seen Rattle!”—rejoined my master. And the duchess smiled and promised.

Such was the position of affairs when they parted at eight that evening at Campden Hill; and all the way home he had been reflecting how to evade his promise of exhibiting his treasure of treasures, his deadly ground-bait, to so vehement a spaniel fancier. For he regarded me, like Whittington’s cat, as the founder of his future fortunes; and if compelled to waste me upon the Duchess of Wigmore, the loss to the British empire, as sustained in its high court of parliament, would be indeed irreparable.

And now, in accordance with the new position of affairs, *how* was he to make an offer of the dog without alluding to Grubridge,—yet in such a way as to bring his parliamentary views to the knowledge of her grace?—Delicacy, in such an emergency, must be fatal.—The duke had, doubtless, half-a-dozen protégés to whom such a wind-fall as Lord Hardenbrass's vacant seat would be manna and quails. But if he suffered the opportunity to escape,—if he allowed the little piece of patronage to fall to the disposal of its rightful owner,—he deserved to be brained with a lady's fan!

A whole hour, by the dial in his poke, did he sit, puzzled by the difficulty of getting an obligation forced upon his acceptance, which he was prepared to be guilty of any amount of shabbiness to secure.

At length, he seized the pen; and whatever he saw fit to say, said it within the compass of two minutes and a sheet of *petit poulet*, and completely to his own satisfaction; for all the time he was sealing and superscribing the letter, he kept smiling

to himself, like Malvolio ;—and having finished his task, proceeded to rouse Mr. Hill, and charge him, as he valued his master and his place, to see that note, and the dog who has the honour of addressing you, safely delivered at Wigmore House before eight o'clock.

“ It is a great object to me that the duchess should receive them as soon as her eyes are open,” added he,—while his drowsy valet stood winking at him with *his* half closed.—“ Here is a five-pound note, Hill ; which you may dispose of in the way you think most likely to secure the accomplishment of my views. The duchess’s maid is probably too fine a lady to be accessible to a bribe ;—but ——”

I shall never forget the look of mingled pity and incredulity with which, at this remark, the plausible valet glanced at the plausible master !—Cicero used to say that he could not understand how two augurs ever met in the street without laughing in each other’s faces ;—and the same wonder might apply to various kinds of modern humbugs.—At this anti-bribery clause, Mr. Hill had so much

difficulty in preserving his usual solemn countenance, that I thought it necessary to come to his aid by a smart short fit of barking, which Mr. Roper accepted, as it was intended, as a

Fare thee well—and if for ever,  
Still for ever fare *thee* well !

And he *was* likely to fare *well*;—like all those who take care to fare at the expense of their friends!—

## CHAPTER IX.

Phœbe pater, si das hujus mihi nomine usum,  
Nec falsâ Clymene culpam sub imagine celat ;  
Pignora da, genitor.

OVID.

Expound, dread Fido, my mysterious lot ;—  
Say, did my mother Mimi, fib or not ?  
Am I thine own or some base cur's descendant ?

*Free Translation.*

AWARE of the undue advantage I possess just now over the human species, and that, according to Æsop's apologue concerning the lion painted by a lion, it is in my power to describe Christians behaving like dogs, and dogs, in the exercise of every Christian virtue,—I generously forbear to place before my readers circumstantial evidence

of the vileness of the intrigue which proved the means of settling me as the envied inmate of Wigmore House.

Suffice it that I was as fully entitled to superadd to the description of my many merits "returns one member to parliament," as any simply represented borough-town in the dominions of our most gracious sovereign.

What I might have felt on installing myself in my aristocratic residence, immediately after the luxurious fare of Lord Algernon, or gentle patronage of Mrs. Vernon, I will not stay to inquire. But it was a great relief to escape the society of Hill and his master; (when roguery is in question, always give precedence to the valet!) I had now accomplished the utmost object of my ambition.—I was a ducal dog. Our precedence was unimpeachable; our creation of the seventeenth century; and we had got the garter and lord lieutenancy of a county!

On better acquaintance, moreover, I would not have exchanged my duchess of fifty for two of five and twenty. As Addison says in *Cato*, (but peo-

ple have forgotten Cato and Addison, so where is the use of talking about them ?) it “ was not the tincture of a skin that I admired ;” for it always struck me that Delcroix did her grace less than justice, and sold her his shop-worn complexions.

But she was the very Aspasia of puppy-dogs ! Many women are kind to a pet of my inches ; giving it meat and drink in due season, or even a corner in their carriage for an airing. But the Duchess of Wigmore studied my convenience and caprices almost before her own. Either because, being aware of the double-dealing and duplicity of her own species, she knew how to value the single-hearted attachment of an honest dog ; or from her mental capacities being nearly on a level with my own, she was never weary of conversing with me. In our frequent *tête-à-têtes*, she would talk to me by the hour together ; and though our intercourse somewhat resembled a game of patience, or rather of dumbmy picquet, I did my utmost to respond with all the eloquence of my eyes and tail, to her grace’s perpetual adjuration of “ *Is it a pet ! Was it a little beauty ! Did naughty Lewson tease the*

poor little dog !” I am convinced, indeed, that her grace was discerning enough to discriminate between my negative and affirmative wag of the tail.

But these were not the only charms of my new situation.—Now, in my maturer years, I blush to own it,—but be it remembered, I was then a puppy,—I was overjoyed to have the best of it as regarded my *unvenerable* sire ! I had often felt shocked at those smoking parties of Roper’s, to hear the disrespectful mention made by the young men of the day, of the authors of theirs.—The tone in which they talked of their respective “governors” was sovereignly displeasing to my curly ears and sense of propriety.

But I now learned to make allowances for their flippancy. If governors *will* be governors, they must expect to be treated as such.—No fault of the puppies their sons that the old dogs choose to fancy themselves endowed with immortal youth !—

I can scarcely describe the absurd manner in which *my* governor pretended to resent my introduction into the house. It is as useless for a



superseded favourite to affect to maintain his rights, as for a minister to fancy he can prose down an adverse majority ; and he would not believe it,—but Fido's occupation was gone !—The dear Duchess of Wigmore required a dog of the day,—a Young England puppy — or rather, a young puppydom pet. Whereas my governor was becoming a sad prig, and the most tiresome old dog in the world.

Every dog has his day ; and Fido had enjoyed *his* with a vengeance. But he had not strength of mind for the parental philosophy of the gentle Dr. Cotton :—

Content from table to arise,  
Nor grudge his sons with envious eyes,  
The relics of his store !

He had given up snarling indeed.—But he used to lie on his cushion, wheezing forth an unapt quotation from some obscure scribbler :

Let no one judge the worth of life save he  
Whose head is white with time !—The youthful spirit  
Set on the edge of the world, hath but one sight,  
And looks for beauty in the years to come ;

While age, like double-faced Janus, gazes

All ways, and ponders wisely on the past !

or issuing his conceited instructions, Chesterfield-wise, concerning politeness of deportment, and other items of minor morals. For Fido was a dog of the *vieille cour* ; and though unaware of the natural tie that bound me to listen respectfully to his drivellings when he was taken prosy, treated me as some decayed member of White's the young aspirant of fashion ; pointing out modes of being irresistible, patent in *his* time, which the spirited young fellow might as well appear in shorts and shoe-buckles, as attempt to follow. There was in fact a touch of Sir Charles Grandison often apparent in the old-fashioned notions of poor Fido.

It was ludicrous enough, after one of his morning lectures upon the propriety of a young dog waiting till he was called before he presumed to disturb the slumbers of his lady, and postponing his breakfast-hour till noon, rather than risk to wake her, or *encanailler* himself by deigning to follow the lady's-maid to her earlier meal,—(lec-

tures savouring terribly of the peevishness of an old dog whose digestion is gone, and who surveys the world with morose misanthropy from his cushion, instead of enjoying it with the vigour and vivacity of Love's young dream,)—it was ludicrous, I say, to observe his air of stupefaction at the endearments lavished upon me by his fickle lady when I leapt upon her embroidered *couvre-pied*; and, instead of waiting till spoken to, roused her by a saucy bark, or by sportively pulling the strings of her night-cap. His dim old eyes used to kindle like coals, as he lay watching my manœuvres!—“In *his* time a dog would as soon have thought of flying as of taking such liberties!” Very likely. But we young dogs of the progress school knew better!

Like most discarded favourites, he injured his cause by sullenness.—It is astonishing how slow people are to profit by the experience of centuries. The reigns of Elizabeth of England and Catherine of Russia, have been stripped of every veil by the denuding hands of history. And yet favourites *will* persist in getting their heads chopped off, instead

of obtaining sackfuls of diamonds and roubles, by learning of the prudent Potemkin to make way for a more attractive successor. Though the road-book of the female heart be as familiar to the vulgar eye as those of Cary or Mogg, how many an overturn on how many a barren moor, merely because ignorant or presumptuous travellers *choose* to mistake their way !

“Fido really grows insupportable !” said the duchess, one morning, while the lady in waiting was dyeing her hair.—“His temper, which was never good, is now a perfect nuisance. Twice yesterday did I hear him growl at poor little Rattle, for merely playing near his cushion ; and I am convinced he would have flown at the poor little dear, and perhaps bitten him, if he had strength.—But he is so feeble that he requires as much attendance as a child.”—

“Your grace may say that !” rejoined Lewson. “I am sure the greater part of my time last winter was spent in nursing him !—And when he had the influenza, as your grace must remember, I was two nights without seeing my bed !”

Her grace *did* remember. And she also remembered the handsome silk dress by which this extra service was repaid.

“I really don’t know what your grace will do if the marchioness brings the children to Wigmore Castle this autumn?” continued the waiting-maid; “for Fido will no more allow them to come near your grace than—”

The duchess appeared less interested in the fate of the marchioness and her children (whoever they might be) than in mine; for she interrupted without ceremony Mrs. Lewson’s surmises.

“Now he is so infirm on his feet,” said she, glancing at the little black *boulette* which was nearly as much of a cushion as the one on which he was lying,—“he gets so fat for want of exercise, that his wheezing at night makes me quite nervous. It puts me so in mind of my late poor asthmatic old aunt, Lady Maria!”

“And I can assure your grace that if ever I take him down to dinner in the steward’s room, Mons. Beshymell says it is quite a *corvy* to have him in the room!”—added Lewson, affectedly.

“A very impertinent observation of Bécha-meil’s !—If I chose to send a hedgehog there to dinner, it is no affair of his !—Not but that I admit Fido to be a bore,—and worse ;—for the duke assures me it is very unwholesome to sleep in the room with an animal whose lungs are affected.”

Mrs. Lewson remembering that the duchess had proposed, some days before, to transfer Fido at night to her chamber, gave a tug to her grace’s hair such as elicited a snarl not much more musical than my father’s.

“I was thinking Lewson,”—said she, after a pause which enabled her to forget her maid’s delinquency, but not her discarded favourite’s,—“that perhaps you might have some relative, with whom I could pension him off?—some old maid, or widow in indifferent circumstances.”

“I can assure your grace,” said Mrs. Lewson, with dignity, (on this occasion too deeply offended for petty vengeance,) “that though I’m in a menyal situation, my relations is remarkable well to do in the world.—There is’nt none of them to whom I

could take the liberty of proposing to board a worn-out lapdog."

"I am glad to hear it Lewson!" replied the duchess, forbearingly. "And yet I remember seeing one day a shabby woman, with a basket crossing the courtyard; and on remonstrating with the porter about having admitted her by the visitors' entrance, he informed me, in excuse, that it was some relation of yours."

The duchess refrained from saying "your mother;" anxious to propitiate her on Fido's account. And how I longed at that moment for the power of speech, on learning that she would be content to pay half-a-guinea a week for the care of him;—a sum that would have secured the old gentleman for the remainder of his days the affectionate attendance of my own dear Jem!

"The duke has peculiar notions on such subjects," resumed my noble mistress, surveying in the glass a poll as black and glossy as a bulfinch's, for which she was indebted to the adroit hands of Mrs. Lewson.—"Whenever his favourite horses grow too old for service, he has them shot.—"

He has an idea that infirm animals are exposed to ill-usage when their master's back is turned ; and, out of pure humanity, has them placed beyond the reach of injury."

"Your grace then thinks that, if the duke were consulted, he would advise having old Fido hung?" said the waiting woman, looking a little shocked.

"Not *hung* !"—said the duchess, taking the *tampon* of her rouge from its satin-wood case.—  
"Not exactly *hung*, Lewson, — it is only *curs* who are hung !—But a single drop of prussic acid removes a dog without pain."

(*Removes a dog* !—Horrible locution !)

"Last year, when there was a suspicion that the hydrophobia had got into Mr. Gripingfield's kennel, thirty couple of fine hounds were taken off by the apothecary, in less than twenty minutes !" — added the duchess.

"To his shop ?"—naïvely inquired the attendant.

"Taken off by hydrocyanic acid !—Conceive the loss to poor Mr. Gripingfield !—the hounds



were valued at more than a thousand pounds. But what are you smiling at, Lewson?"—

"I was thinking, my lady, what a pity it was that apothecaries were not always as candid about their share in taking off their patients."

"Don't laugh about it!—It is a *very* serious thing to reflect how thoroughly one lies at the mercy of one's apothecary.—A mistake is so easily made, and so little thought of!—And it must harden those peoples' hearts so horribly to be always attending deathbeds, and painful operations. I often tell Hummington he has no more feeling than a stone."

I trust the reader does not suppose me sufficiently in Mr. Hummington's case to doubt that, long before the close of this monstrous colloquy, I had laid me down "like the meek mountain lamb" beside the cushion of the parent whose days were thus barbarously menaced.—My poor old Anchises! —I swore to myself that Hummington should only reach him, vial in hand, by trampling on my mangled corse!

Nothing ensued, however.—Her grace was one

of the many who talk daggers but use none.—And no sooner had my apprehensions subsided, and the old creature resumed his airs of old-fashioned superiority,—pretending to tell me what dogs I ought to cut, and what dogs were visitable acquaintance, whether belonging to the “hairystockoratical” saloon or steward’s room, I began to think him as great a bore as ever, and once more to treat him as my “governor.”

It was in vain I assured him that the days of exclusivism were past ; that the march of intellect and Reform Bill have placed society on an enlightened footing ; that *every* dog of refined manners and cultivated intelligence is worthy the acquaintanceship of the best of his species.—In reply, he flung the French revolution snarlingly in my teeth !

“Does it become *us*,” said he,—“the legitimate descendants of the favourite of the Royal Stuart,—to derogate by sentiments of this democratic nature?—So long as our race is honoured by bearing the name of King Charles, *so* long let us adhere to the footsteps of the throne !—I swear to you, my dear

Rattle, that sooner than lap out of a saucer not marked with a coronet, I would perish of thirst!—Last week, you heard the duchess order them to call in Aynsly to me; and the blockhead ordered me a powder and hot flannels, protesting that I had taken cold!”

“And had you not taken cold?”—said I,—aware that those who are stricken in years, are fond of assigning for their indispositions any other cause than the real one, *i. e.* old age.

“No more than yourself!”—cried he.—“But Lewson (who has no more sense of *les convenances* than if she had lived all her life in Bloomsbury Square) left me stuck up here the other evening when the duchess was gone to the opera, with a dreadful creature of a Blenheim spaniel, belonging to the wife of our upholsterer,—or something of the same description,—with whom she was gone to the Princess’s theatre; and it was positively too much for me.—A dog with whom one had not an idea in common,—a dog for whom *our* world is non-existent!—The beast wanted to be familiar, and show its knowledge of life.—And what

could it possibly *know* of life, except what can be picked up in the streets?—Next morning, I was seriously indisposed !”

“No wonder !”—said I, with the unfilial purpose of fooling him to the top of his bent. “There is something *antipathique*, something *qui agace les nerfs*, in the vulgarity of a *parvenu* !”

“Thank you, my dear Rattle, thank you ”—wheezed the decayed dandy. “It is refreshing to hear such sentiments, in days like these,—for alas ! I am sometimes terrified to fear that I am the last dog of my race which respects itself sufficiently to keep up the dignity of the species: and that, as Louis XV. said, *après nous, le déluge* !—I assure you, my dear fellow, that on perceiving your favour with her grace, like Voltaire when the sublime Emilie Duchatelet attached herself to St. Lambert, my chief annoyance arose from dread lest the new favourite should turn out to be a *parvenu* ! After living all my life in the best company, it would have been excruciating, in the decline of life, to associate with some city savage,—some provincial Hottentot,—or some upstart from the moneyed district of Maryle-

bone !—It was whispered indeed in the house, on the faith of some vile calumniator or abominable anonymous letter, that Lewson had first met you at a house at Portland Place ?—No ! do not defend yourself !—I am convinced it is mere scandal ! The distinction of your manners soon set my fears at rest. Even before I became aware that you had been bred by Lord Algernon Howarth, I saw at a glance you had moved exclusively in the *grand monde* !”

Though I longed exceedingly to “ put my paw unto my nose and spread my fingers out,” I contented myself with languidly wagging my tail, as in acknowledgment of the compliment. No need to enlighten his prejudiced mind by allusion to the Sims’s garret !

“ There is something in high breeding which no counterfeit can simulate !”—continued the old gentleman, curling his fastidious nose.—“ I dare say you have heard of the famous Comte de Vaudreuil, of the *ancien régime*,—(an admirer of Marie Antoinette,)—of whom it was said that if you rolled him twenty years in the gutter, he

would emerge from it without having contracted a speck of mud?—I trust it is not undue presumption which leads me to recognize in myself the Vaudreuil of our species!—Indeed, I can scarcely reconcile it to myself to carry with me to the grave a thousand traditions of our ancient line connecting it with the great houses of Europe; besides certain undivulged anecdotes of modern manners, which ought to be impressed on the mind of every puppy, as a manual for his government in the slippery paths of fashionable life.”

Tears stood in the eyes of my infirm progenitor.—He looked amazingly as if he had been drinking.—Governors are apt to grow moral as they grow maudlin.

“In my early days,”—continued he, with a self-deploring shake of the head, which caused his poor old black ears to vibrate like the sable plumes caparisoning the horses of a mourning coach,—“none but our species, or an Italian greyhound, were suffered to enter a lady’s boudoir, or the state apartments of a family of distinction.—But now, my dear Rattle, all sorts of dogs are admitted

into society !—I grieve to say it.—But, last year, when we were on a visit to our daughter-in-law, the Marchioness of Rosamel, there was a vulgar beast of a terrier, who had evidently been brought up in the stable-yard, and accustomed to hunt rats and indulge in every kind of plebeian recreation, who was constantly in her ladyship's drawing-room,—because, forsooth, he was a capital guard to the children in their walks !—I only ask you to conceive how thoroughly the beast was *déplacé* !—They might as well have had up the footman at once !—I, for my part, marked my sense of so strange a breach of etiquette, by never exchanging a bark with him the whole time we were at Rosamel Park ; taking care to show the whole party that I considered myself an animal of very different species.”

“ They never could have thought otherwise !” said I, gravely. “ The working-dog class of the community is so differently organized !—It would be difficult indeed to confound one of *us* with the sheep-dogs of the north,—or the brutes of St. Bernard, endowed as they are with the cunning which

the world calls instinct ! Conceive said I,”—caressing my whiskers with my fore paw, with an air of unspeakable disgust,—“conceive the misery of having been born a turnspit, or a truffle-dog !”

“Instead of having duchesses for our chambermaids, and queens for our nursing mothers !”—added Fido,—with an ineffable smile, and *air avantageux*, in which there still shone something of the light of other days.

“The moment a dog is compelled to work for his bread, I look upon him as something less than a dog !”—said I. “Our physical conformation clearly indicates that nature intended to exempt us from mechanical labours. She endowed our hearts with fidelity to attach us to our master, and fangs to defend his cause. But it required the ingenious malevolence of mankind to imagine such a misappropriation as to harness us to trucks, or chain us to the spit ! I say ‘us’ by the same figure of speech which induces the venison-fed O’Connell to identify himself with the starving population of Ireland ; for Heaven be thanked, the car of Titania were alone susceptible of traction by such diminitude as ours !”



Saying which, I extended my little leg, feathered like that of a bantam, as the dandies used in the days of buckskins and top-boots,—as much as to say to the poor gouty old gentleman by my side, —“ There, old fellow !—show such a leg as that, if you can.”

But he pretended blindness ; contenting himself with responding in a plaintive whine !—“ As you say,—my dear Rattle,—we were not intended for the truck system !”

Filial duty sealed my lips.—All I trusted was that caution might seal *his* against the insidious advances of the family apothecary.—But after that morning, I began to look with mistrust upon the dear duchess. I discerned a touch of the Laffarge in her,—a glance of the Brinvilliers,—with which our family had never come so closely in contact since its domestication in the Palazzo Medici at Florence.

There is something in the word “ POISON ” which at all times causes one’s blood to creep ! People run the same risk, indeed, every time they attend a public dinner, or dine at any fashionable

hotel where French cookery is professed. But *there*, at least, they are on their guard!— The family apothecary, on the other hand, not only poisons in cool blood, but with as specious a countenance as Guizot's, when, like Barrington, he stands picking the pocket of the man, or minister, he is talking to, with the instrument which he had himself manufactured.

I do remember an apothecary—

But *that* story, dear reader, I will tell you another time!

## CHAPTER X.

Their tricks and craft hae put me daft,  
They've ta'en me in, and a' that;  
But clear your decks and "Here's the sex!"  
I like the jades for a' that!—  
For a' that and a' that,—  
And twice as meikle's a' that,—  
My dearest blude to do them gude,  
They're welcome till't for a' that!—

BURNS.

I CAN'T bear to see girls cry!—Those whose noses it reddens, look what Brother Jonathan calls so "almighty ugly;"—while to others, it imparts so interesting and touching an air as to make one cry for company. When poor Lady Jane Barnsford came, the following day, weeping, to the arms

of her aunt at Wigmore House, there was no standing it !

She was sent there by her lady mother, to be what is called “brought to reason.” Whenever there happens to be a duchess-aunt in a family, she is brought out on grand occasions like a piece of ornamental ordnance on gala days ; and officiates as a sort of honorary Lord Chancellor for the controlment of the junior branches. The Duchess of Wigmore was often in request to give lectures to such of her nieces as were weak enough to fall in love, or such of her nephews as were strong enough to break their leading-strings and betake themselves to lansquenet.

So far from sympathizing in poor Lady Jane’s despair concerning Sir Seymour Manners, the duchess not only attempted to storm her into resentment by protesting that he had acted shamefully ; but declared, without conscience or scruple, that she was heartily glad of it ;—that the match was far beneath the pretensions of her niece.

“ A year or two hence, my dear child, you would have been a miserable woman !”—said she ;

“whereas if you make up your mind to marry Lord Hardenbrass—”

“Make up my mind to marry *Lord Hardenbrass*?”—replied her niece with a look of blank amazement. “Why it is the first time I ever heard his name in my life!”

“The first time you——oh! I forgot that my sister had not yet mentioned the subject to you!” cried the duchess. “She wrote me a volume about it yesterday, however,—which I have scarcely had time to read.”

“A volume about *what*?”—

“Lord Hardenbrass’s proposals.”

“My dearest aunt, you must be dreaming!—I do not know such a person!”—

“You do not know such a *name*!—But don’t you remember that Mr. Horsfall you refused the first season you were out?”

“Perfectly ;—the most——”

“Hush, hush!” cried the duchess, anticipating what was to follow.—“Say nothing about him now; for he has succeeded to his cousin’s title,—and, *we trust*, to his estates.—And the first thing

he did on the occasion, was to renew his proposals for your hand !”

“ After so positive a refusal ?”—

“ Oh ! *that* was under circumstances totally different. You were just out.—The world was all before you.—You had a right to form higher expectations.—Your claims have since diminished, and *his* increased.”

“ If my claims have diminished, my dislike of *him* has not.—Besides, dearest aunt, you are aware that I am attached to another person.”—

“ But if that other will have nothing to say to you ?”

“ Even *that* does not inspire me with a desire to have anything to say to your odious Mr. Horsfall——”

“ *Lord Hardenbrass*,” emended the duchess, quietly, but emphatically.

“ Mr. Horsfall or Lord Hardenbrass ; — the name signifies little, so long as the nature is unchanged.”

“ You are quite right, my dear !—The change of name is, as you observe, nothing.—I agree with

you, (and have already written as much to my sister,) that it will be necessary to make the most careful inquiries before we commit ourselves.—A barren title is, as you say, an incumbrance rather than an advantage.”

“But I said nothing of the kind. I *thought* nothing of the kind!—I care not a straw what fortune Lord Hardenbrass has inherited; and were he as rich as Cræsus, should still think him one of the most wretched and insignificant creatures in the world!” cried Lady Jane,—with growing emotion.

“Nonsense, nonsense, child!—You don’t know what you are talking about.—All this is the mere silly, make-believe sentimentality of a school-girl!”—

“It may be silly, but it is not make-believe!” persisted her niece, with spirit; “I should not know *how* to dissemble, even were I inclined.—And if Lord Hardenbrass were to enter the room this moment, you would hear me tell him, as I told him last year, and as I would tell him even if, with the barony of his cousin, he had inhe-

rited the finest estates in the kingdom,—that I would sooner throw myself into a well than become his wife !”

“The maid of all-work at a farm throws herself into a well when crossed in love,”—observed the Duchess, with a provoking smile. “It were a somewhat ignominious mode of exit for Lord Wormington’s daughter. But why, my dear Jane, did you not exhibit all this eloquence and energy to Sir Seymour? Before *him*, you appeared a stupid automaton, that cannot speak till it is wound up ! To see you in his company, no one would have surmised that you possessed a particle of sense or feeling !”

“Because I felt too much !”

“No one could have guessed it, who saw you together !—You gave both Sir Seymour and the rest of the world, the impression of being cold, sullen, and indifferent.”

“Dearest aunt !” interrupted Lady Jane, “you are well aware that I refused Lord Algernon Howarth for his sake !”

“And yet, by leading him to suppose that you



neither knew nor cared whether he were present or absent, you produced in himself a similar result."

"*Produced* it? You think, then, that he once really liked me?"

"What signifies,—since all is over?"

"What has been, may be again.—If I could but once more secure his attention, how differently should I behave!—For, alas! I see my error now that it is too late!"

"Nothing easier than to attract his attention, if you thought proper. Everybody notices a decided flirtation. Everybody is interested by the report of a marriage."

"But *I* am not going to be married?"

"A few civil words to Lord Hardenbrass would answer the purpose as well."

"But, dear aunt, I really *cannot* talk to that disagreeable man!—A person one scarcely thought a gentleman, till he became a peer!"

"Just as you please, my dear!—But in that case, you must not come with me to the Opera to-night. For at your mother's desire, I was so

gracious to him yesterday, that if you are with me, he will certainly pay me a visit."

"Sir Seymour Manners *always* pays you a visit;" said the poor girl in a querulous voice, as if still undecided in her projects.

"And does not leave town till Monday, I find," added the duchess.

"I *will* go with you, then, dear aunt, if you will allow me," said Lady Jane, with a heavy sigh. And strange to tell, down came the tears again! Though what there could be to cry at in the prospect of going to the opera, is too hard for canine comprehension.

From that day, however, to the moment of our leaving town, showers of tears became as quotidian in the house as though Lady Jane Barnsford had cried upon St. Swithin's day.

On Sunday, after church, came thunder-storm the first. The silken hangings of the duchess's boudoir actually vibrated with the sobs of her niece. As far as I could guess from the confidences interchanged between the young lady and mine, the notice conceded to Lord Hardenbrass at

the duchess's suggestion, had proved the means of provoking the strongest evidences of disgust on the part of Sir Seymour; and I attributed the state of panting excitement under which the poor girl (upbraided by her aunt on a previous occasion for being inanimate as an automaton!) traversed and re-traversed the room, to the anguish inflicted by the scorn of the man she preferred, and whom she felt that she had lost for ever.

“That it should end thus!—After all our intimacy; that it should end thus!”—murmured she, wringing her hands;—“to part—to part for ever—without a single word of explanation!”

“But, my dear, he does not *wish* for an explanation,”—said the Duchess; who was rolling my ears into jet rings round her jewelled fingers. “Persons who desire an explanation, *seek* one. If, at the end of the season, there were to be scenes and explanations (as you call them) between all the partners who have danced together—”

Again were the impatient gestures of poor Lady Jane renewed.

“And to think that the day is passing away!”

said she, no longer addressing the duchess, “the last of his being in town,—the last of his being in England,—and that to-morrow all will be as much broken between us as though it had never been!—After to-morrow, we shall be as strangers!—After to-morrow, he will perhaps address himself to another! Oh! every moment is precious; and yet nothing—nothing can be done!”—

What would I not have given for the power of re-assuring and advising the poor girl, whose feelings were so much too genuine for the atmosphere appointed her to breathe!—What would I not have given to be the Talleyrand entrusted with the negotiation of her destinies!—Or rather to have exonerated her from the influence of all Talleyrandism;—for it is only by leaving worthy natures like hers and Sir Seymour’s free and uncontrolled, that good can ensue.

The poor little dog, however, was forced to hold his bark; and the ascendancy of the duchess over the bewildered mind that knew not where to turn for solace or counsel, was again triumphant.

“Show more spirit, my dear Jane,—show a lit-

tle more spirit, or I shall really be ashamed of you!" cried she.—"Here is a man who has been flirting with you up to the last minute of the season; and now goes abroad, after throwing some kind of impertinent word or look into your face; yet you are abject enough to sit and cry after him!—For heaven's sake, do not let the world discover his influence over your feelings! Suffice it that you sacrificed the affections of Lord Algeron for such an ingrate. All I fear is, that Mr. Roper saw you change colour when Sir Seymour slammed the box-door in that extremely impertinent manner last night, and will make an amusing story of it for the diversion of all the dinner-parties in town!"—

"And what would you have me do, then?" inquired the poor girl.

"Show yourself in the drive to-day, with a cheerful countenance."

"*A cheerful countenance!*" moaned poor Lady Jane.

"Which I admit to be somewhat difficult with those swollen eyelids.—But go to my dressing

room, my dear,—and Lewson will give you some sal-volatile, and bathe your eyes with eau-de-cologne and water ; and as the carriage is not ordered till six, you can draw the curtains and lie down for an hour on my sofa, *en attendant*, to get rid of your headache.”

Lady Jane did as she was bid ; not, I fancy, to get rid of her headache, but her aunt. And when the carriage was announced, she came down bright and smiling, looking so pretty, that, had I not been in the secret of the sal-volatile and eau-de-cologne, I should have decided her to be one of the happiest of her sex. I felt proud of having to accompany anything so pretty into the park ; instead of finding myself eternally attached to the bundle of millinery and cosmetics, which fashion and strawberry leaves alone preserved from being an object of disgust.

Oftener than I care to own had my bristles been set on end by the impertinence of certain dogs of equivocal reputation, peering from Broughams or Clarences, and asserting over me a superiority derived from the fair faces and slender forms of their

beauteous mistresses.—But for the remembrance of the former situation of my ever-beloved mother in the household of Mademoiselle Mélanie, I might perhaps have permitted myself to retort upon the ignominy of their social position. But I was revenged in a nobler manner, on finding myself stationed in the duchess's open carriage beside the Serpentine, on the knee of Lady Jane Barnsford ;—the prettiest girl in town,—let who will say to the contrary.

I never heard that the Serpentine had a spray. Yet certain it is, that while the face of my fair protectress was turned towards it, as if to escape seeing what was going on in the drive, an inexplicable moisture bedewed my glossy poll. It *must* have been the spray of those rippling waves !—She *could* not be crying *again* !

I scarcely know what to say about it, however. For when the duchess, weary of her taciturnity, ordered the coachman to take a turn, and we proceeded back towards Apsley House, along that alarming line of exquisites and *dévastés* which, on Sundays, lines the rails with saucy faces and a

running fire of criticism on the equipages and their inmates, as they drawl slowly by,—I noticed that a well-appointed britszka was anchored close to the spot where, on last passing, we had left Sir Seymour Manners on Lord Algernon Howarth's arm ;—and as the latter had now disappeared, it was clearly Sir Seymour to whom were dedicated the coquetish smiles of the pretty creature to whom it belonged ; who, though she had stopped the carriage to converse with him, affected a sort of coy reluctance in contributing her share to the dialogue.

No ! decidedly there rises no spray from the waters of the Serpentine ! For though we were now on the park side of the road, the dew became heavier than ever.

A moment after losing sight of the britszka, we were accosted by a man on horseback ;—(I say “man” advisedly ;—for be it remembered that it was Sunday,—among gentlemen, *dies non* for park equestrianism,)—a man, with broad red face and hard grey eyes that looked straight into Lady Jane's,—a man devoid of sentiment, modesty, and



all the other graces of life,—fully accounting for the shiver of loathing that ran through her frame as he addressed us.

“ I am thinking of taking a stroll in the gardens,” said the duchess, in reply to his remarks upon the weather.—“ After the heat of the day, a little fresh air is so delightful !—I conclude, Lord Hardenbrass, the crowd has dispersed ?—I did not see many carriages waiting ? ”—

“ Not half-a-dozen. The populace has gone home to tea,” replied his lordship.—“ But even when the mob is thickest, one may always secure a quiet walk towards the palace.—Shall I desire the coachman to drive to the gate ? ”

On an affirmative sign from her grace, away we went.—And to my infinite joy ; for, having *les grandes entrées*,—an exclusive ticket of admission,—by favour of the Woods and Forests,—nothing delighted me more than to observe the envious looks cast by the city dames from their ill-hung carriages, and hear the murmurs of the *οι πολλοι* who are obliged to skirt the walls with their curs, (“ no dogs admitted ! ”) against the hairy-stockora-

tical privilege created in favour of my High-Tiny-ness.

On the present occasion, however, my satisfaction was impaired by the presence of one of the most disagreeable persons I had ever the ill fortune to encounter ;—under-bred, facetious, presuming ; and doubly audacious just then, from fancying himself singled out by the especial patronage of the all-puissant duchess of Wigmore.

“ What a funny little animal ! ”—said he, taking the liberty of caressing me, as a pretext for approaching nearer the arm of Lady Jane, on which I was couched as we entered the gardens. “ Your ladyship’s, of course ? ”

“ It is the duchess’s dog, ”—replied Lady Jane, with an air of *hauteur* I had never before seen her assume.

“ Almost as small as Mrs. Jerningham’s, I declare ! ” said he, again endeavouring to caress me ; on which, my fair protectress set me down on the grass,—a movement so misunderstood by Lord Hardenbrass, that he ventured to offer her his arm, and looked surprised on finding it coldly declined.

“ALMOST as small?” reiterated the dear duchess,—probably with the view of giving him time to recover countenance after the rebuff.—“It is the *very* smallest of the kind in England!”

“*Next* to Mrs. Jerningham’s, I really think it is!”—rejoined the *ci-devant* Mr. Horsfall,—(vulgar brute !)

“I never saw Mrs. Jerningham, *or* her dog,” replied the duchess, nearly as haughtily as her niece.

“Your grace sees her every day in the park.”

“I seldom enter the park,” said my mistress; “and then only to take the air. I never look into carriages with which I am unacquainted.”

“But you *must* have seen Mrs. Jerningham at the opera. She has one of the best boxes in the house, in the centre of the ground tier.”

The duchess was inflexible. “I know no lady who has a box in that part of the house,” said she, with the sternness of a grand inquisitor.

“And yet your grace can scarcely have avoided seeing Mrs. Jerningham,” persisted Lord Harden-

brass, "for she is one of the best dressers in town. She has all her things from Paris."

"If you mean that she is a showy dresser, it would be the very thing to deter me from looking at her," cried the duchess, peevishly. "I hate the sight of a woman who dresses after a *journal des modes*."

"I should think Mrs. Jerningham's dress more likely to be copied *by* the *journal des modes*!" replied the hard-featured, hard-natured man.—  
"But unless I am much mistaken, I saw both your grace and Lady Jane admiring her just now—"

"Just now?"—

"In an open carriage—"

"There were a hundred open carriages in the drive—"

"I mean the green britzka, into which Manners was talking."—

"Sir Seymour Manners?"

"Exactly.—He is a great admirer of Mrs. Jerningham; or rather, *was* a great admirer, before her runaway marriage.—They live in the same county; and at one time, when Manners first came out, people fancied it would be a match."

“ Which does not prevent their being as good friends as ever,” observed the duchess,—“ for I remember noticing their intimacy.”

“ Yes,—many people have noticed their intimacy !”—rejoined Lord Hardenbrass, with a significant smile. “ Towards the end of a season, such things are apt to come to a crisis.”

At that moment Lady Jane made a false step ; (the turf in the less frequented parts of Kensington Gardens is shamefully ill-kept,—as I beg my noble friends of the Woods and Forests to take notice !) and Lord Hardenbrass being encouraged by her stumble to renew the offer of his arm, it was not a second time declined. I suspect she had some difficulty in supporting herself.

“ What a pretty landscape !” said the duchess, stopping suddenly, and looking steadily through her eye-glass at the fine old trees gracing the shelving opposite bank, where a few persevering stragglers of the morning’s throng were still scattered.—“ How strange that it should never occur to one to enter these gardens,—for they are *really* very pretty !—I often send my maid

here, to give poor Fido a walk in a spot where he is safe from the dog-stealers.—But next season, I positively think I shall take to walking here myself!”

Her grace’s purpose was to place the happy couple at their ease, by giving them to suppose her attention otherwise absorbed. But so very pointed a protestation that she was doing an unusual thing, appeared to *me* almost too great a compliment to Lord Hardenbrass,—whom, every moment, I hated more and more. What boots,—and what a gait!—It strikes me, by the way, that I could more easily detect a man *de mauvaise compagnie* by his *chaussure*, than by any other personal delinquency.

My contempt of the fellow was obvious, I believe, even to the duchess; for as I went sniffing scornfully after him, she kept calling me off, as though afraid that he might punish my fastidious sternutations by a kick. She was even at the trouble of lecturing me on my ill-manners in so continuous and audible a strain of reprehension, as completely to cover all that was saying be-

tween her companions,—like the arpeggio of an ill-played accompaniment that overpowers the melody of a song. Though apt enough to apostrophize me when *tête-à-tête*, her colloquial pertinacity, on the present occasion, was too remarkable to be accidental.

“Has he proposed again?”—said she *sotto voce*, the moment we re-entered the carriage, to Lady Jane, who had already covered her face with her hands.

“He has—and I have accepted him!”—said she, in a scarcely audible voice, shrinking into a corner of the carriage, with a vain endeavour to conceal herself and her tears.

“Then you have done the wisest thing you ever did in your life, my dear child,—and I heartily wish you joy!”—said the duchess, endeavouring to take her hand,—the park being now empty.

“Tell them to drive home, dear aunt,—tell them to drive fast!”—said the poor girl, in the same hollow voice.—“I want to be at home.—I cannot answer for myself.—I feel as if I should go mad!—I *must* see my mother!”

Poor Lady Jane Barnsford ! As I watched the flood of bitter tears that gushed from her eyes, how perfectly content I felt to be a dog !—The pains and penalties attached to the dignity of human nature, are, by Jupiter, no trifle !



## CHAPTER XI.

O that I thought it could be in a woman  
To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love ;  
To keep her constancy in plight and youth  
Outliving beauty's outward, with a mind  
That doth renew swifter than blood decays.

SHAKSPEARE.

*Militiæ species amor est.*

OVID.

It has been often asserted, especially by Grub Street writers, (what quarter of the present metropolis, by the way, answers to the Grub Street of the days of Swift ?)—it has been often asserted, I say, that the world of fashion possesses, like certain streams, the faculty of encoating objects immersed in it with calcareous particles, till they are

as good as turned to stone. And in the eyes of many, such petrifications possess considerable value.

One of these petrifying processes was now proceeding under my eyes !—But I am ready to swear that my dear, pretty, warm-hearted Lady Jane was genuine flesh and blood when first I made her acquaintance.

I shall never forget the scene that occurred next morning at Wigmore House. Before the duchess had got through half a column of the Morning Post, (her first duty of the day,) came her niece ;—and the hint dropped by Lewson, that her ladyship had arrived with her maid in a hack cab, served only to exasperate her grace's indignation at being disturbed.—After a short toilet, however, —for even her *négligé* was an affair of complex art, the maid and lap-dog being alone permitted to view her as nature made her, or rather as time had left her,—the poor girl was introduced into the dressing-room ; and unless she *had* been introduced, and by name too, I doubt whether I should have known her again !

A violet shade surrounded her sunken eyes. Her lips seemed to have grown thin from compression. Her hair hung loose on her forehead, as though lank and lifeless. She was older by five years than the day before. Though the warm atmosphere of summer was breathing into the room the duchess complained, when she embraced her that she was cold as death.

“Has your mother recovered her raptures yet at your new prospects, my dear Jane?”—inquired my mistress, as soon as Lewson had left the room. “I never saw a woman so pleased as she was last night!”—

“I have not seen mamma this morning. She seemed, indeed, very happy last night,”—said Lady Jane, in a voice nearly as much changed as her countenance.—“I fear I must have been a very troublesome daughter,—she is so glad to part with me!”—

“No, no,—my dear,—she loves you dearly.—But she wishes to see you settled in life,—she wishes to see you independent!”—

“*Independent!*”—faltered the poor girl.

“ We are not immortal, you know, my dear Jane; and should anything happen to my sister, your home would be a precarious one.—It is entirely for your own sake she wishes to see you married.”—

“ For my own sake, —against my inclinations ?”—

“ You surely, my dear, are not childish enough to suppose that half the happy marriages you see in the world,—or even a quarter,—were the result of inclination ?”—

“ I do not see many happy marriages in the world,” observed Lady Jane, in tremulous accents, removing her bonnet, as if to relieve her faintness by fresher air, and thus rendering more apparent the grievous disorder of her person.

“ Consider,” resumed the duchess, in the tone of a professor lecturing a favourite pupil, or rather in the tone in which old Fido ventured to harangue myself,—“ consider, my dear child, the next to impossibility, that, out of the millions of human beings extant, the two persons best suited to each other should happen to meet ;—and above all, to

meet under circumstances, enabling them to become husband and wife !—It is like drawing the thirty thousand pounds prize in the lottery, Jane, on which no one has a right to calculate.—Those who have drawn blanks, must content themselves with having taken their chance ; and if prudent, will assume a smiling countenance, and keep their own counsel.”

“ More prudent still, if they avoid the risk, by taking no ticket !”—rejoined the ghastly-looking girl, attempting to smile, while she pressed her hand to her forehead, as though its aching were difficult to bear,—for she had evidently not closed her eyes all night.

“ If it were not the end of the season,” observed the duchess, “ I admit that you might take time to deliberate about what *you* call taking a ticket. But Lord Hardenbrass, my dear, does not seem a man to be trifled with. If you lose this chance, you lose it for ever ; and should it be the last, my dear Jane, I need not tell you, how bitterly my sister would be disappointed !—Remember how mortified she was by your rejection of Lord Algernon !—

And she has really set her heart on your marrying this season."

Lady Jane uttered a gasp, which could scarcely be called a sigh.—She came with the hope of making a friend of her aunt.—All this was sorry preparation !

" You cannot think how pleased everybody was, at Lady Surcingle's last night, to hear of the match !" resumed the duchess ; " everybody seemed to feel that it is time you should be married !" —

" You do not mean that you *announced* my engagement !" cried Lady Jane, becoming if possible paler than before.

" Have you forgotten that it was so agreed between us all, before I left your mother last evening ?"

" True !—But still I did not think—"

" My sister was of opinion, that the engagement had better be known at once."

" But so soon,—so *very* soon !" —murmured Lady Jane.

" To the last, my dear, you would have felt

equally reluctant. It is only natural in a young girl!—By to-morrow, it will be an old story.—People have so much to talk of!”

“But was not every one *very* much surprised?”

“Not in the least!—They were prepared for it, by seeing Lord Hardenbrass take you out from the opera, last night, in so particular a manner,” replied her aunt.

“But they have seen Sir Seymour Manners take me out in the same manner, every other night of the season?”

“Every night of every alternate week.—But you forget, my dear, that they saw *him* take out Mrs. Jerningham on the intervening nights,” added the artful duchess; “and between a pretty girl and handsome married woman, I am afraid the wicked world will always assign the preponderating influence to the latter.”

Again was poor Lady Jane forced to respond “True!” But *this* time, it was in a tone in which indignation struggled with despair.

“And now, my dear Jane, what is it you want me to say or do for you?” demanded the duchess,

perceiving that the moment was propitious to her views, “for it is late, my dear, and I want to dress. I promised your mother to see Lord Hardenbrass for her this morning —”

“I scarcely know *what* I want!” interrupted her niece, rising from her seat, with quivering lips, and a slight streak of colour tinging her cheek. “Were I to tell you, indeed, what brought me hither, you would only think me weak and inconsistent,—*too* weak,—*too* inconsistent ;—for since I have been in this room, my mind has again wavered.”

“All very natural, my dear !—In your situation most girls feel as you do.—Marry whom you might, you could not at once fully reconcile yourself to the change.”

Lady Jane was on the point of expressing a contrary opinion.—But some sudden revolution jarred against her pride, and she forbore.

“In a few days,” resumed the duchess, “when all is settled, and you begin to see in Lord Hardenbrass the man who is desirous to devote his life to promoting your happiness, and who, in spite of



all your ungraciousness, has persevered in admiring and loving you, and hastened on his accession of fortune to place it at your feet,—you will learn to feel grateful;—and from gratitude to affection, my dear, is an easy step.”

Lady Jane’s answer, which consisted in slightly raising her eyes to Heaven, was visible only to myself. For the dear duchess, though she could not see beyond her nose, would have cut it off rather than publish, by wearing spectacles, a certificate of her age.

Having now rung for Lewson and her hot water, as a hint to her niece that the hot water in which *she* was immersed, was *de trop*, Lady Jane Barnsford resumed her bonnet and her woes (as too sacred for the participation of the lady’s maid)—and prepared for departure by entreating her aunt to call in Brook Street the first thing when she drove out; or, if anything important transpired in her interview with Lord Hardenbrass, to send her a note in the interim.

By “anything important,” I of course understood her to mean any welcome circumstance

promising to break off the match. But after she was gone, to hear the manner in which the affair was talked over between my mistress and her *soubrette*, any one would have supposed not alone that the whole family was prepared to receive Lord Hardenbrass with open arms ; but that even those of Lady Jane were closed only by the consciousness of maiden modesty.

“ A charming match for her indeed !”—replied her grace to Mrs. Lewson’s obsequious congratulations. “ I should have been quite nervous to see the poor dear girl go down to Barnsford again unmarried. The dampness of that place is fatal to the complexion. My sister became an old woman at five and thirty,—and I dare say will not survive the prime of life.—Hummington often shakes his head about her ;—and as you must have noticed, Lewson, both Lady Caroline and Lady Harriet went off completely at two or three and twenty—so that Car was glad to marry a younger brother, while Lady Harriet, poor thing, is actually married to a clergyman,—a complete goody, lost to her family and the world !”

“ At all events, your grace, Lady Jane will do better for herself than that,” interposed the waiting woman. “ It would have been a thousand pities for her la’ ship if this match could not have been brought about.—Considering the advantages she has had—going out with your grace, and all,—I really wonder Lady Jane should not have settled at once. Your grace, if you remember, thought the business might come on again with Lord Algernon Howarth, and I know the Normanfords thought so too.”

“ Why—what should *you* know, Lewson, about the Duke of Normanford’s opinions?”—demanded my mistress, evidently displeased by this familiar mention of her peers.

“ I ask your grace’s pardon!—But really we hear all them sort of things in the steward’s room. Normanford’s people,—I mean his grace the Duke of Normanford’s people, are intimate with ours: and Lord Algernon’s servant is a *hammy de coor* of Beshymell.”

“ And did he inform you that Lord Algernon was still attached to Lady Jane?” inquired the

duchess,—in spite of her dignity, a little inquisitive.

“ On the contrary.—But I ask your grace’s pardon for troubling you with such idle gossip.”

“ On the contrary—*what*, Lewson ?”—persisted the duchess, in a tone that *chose* to be answered.

“ Only that his lordship’s valet used to fancy Lady Jane would be glad to renew the old affair if she *could*.”

“ The best answer to such nonsense is, that after a long courtship, she is going to be married to Lord Hardenbrass,”—replied the duchess with a resumption of dignity.

And a discussion immediately ensued between the lady and lady’s maid concerning the most appropriate wedding dress,—not for the bride, but the duchess. The sighs, sorrows, and sentimentalities of the case, were all resumed in, “ Remember, Lewson, to send my Brussels flounces and veil to Mrs. Curling. There will be a breakfast and all that sort of thing ; and though it is the end of the season, I must have something of a dress.”

For the sake of those who might have to see my poor mistress as closely as *I* did,—I trusted it might be a great deal of a dress. But I own I also trusted to be spared the interview with Lord Hardenbrass. Setting aside my personal interest in Lady Jane, I had taken an aversion to the fellow.—His hard, colourless, shadeless, dare-the-world eye, was to *my* delicacy of feeling, Newgatorial.—

Besides, I had heard enough of chaffering and bargaining, when my own precious little person was in the market; without hearing such ignominious terms renewed to the disparagement of the gentle, feminine Lady Jane.

But I was doomed to disappointment!—In awkward interviews,—especially a tête-a-tête,—the presence of a dog is a relief: and the dear duchess, who was prepared to dispose of her sister's daughter at the highest possible price, probably foresaw that while insisting on certain points in the settlements of which she felt *rather* ashamed, it might be as well to have me couched coaxably in her lap, as a pretext for not looking the predestined victim in the face.

But as I live by chicken bones, it would be as easy to look the mid-day sun in the face, at Calcutta, as the Right Honourable Lord Hardenbrass in his new phase of vain-glory!—Had he come from winning the battle of Waterloo, or the Catholic Question, he could not have looked more triumphant than when he took the seat placed for him by the groom of the chambers in the duchess's boudoir, in the character of her nephew elect !

To be accepted by a pretty girl, must, at any time, be a satisfactory event.—But to be accepted by a pretty girl whose unexceptionability in every respect places her among the first in the London list,—and above all, to be accepted by a pretty girl by whom you have been previously refused,—is almost enough to justify the full-orbed radiance of the Hardenbrass disk ! Had the duchess's lily-white skin been natural, I really think she would have run some risk of being tanned by the luminary that glowed upon her.

Its rays, however, were soon overclouded. On entering the boudoir, Lord Hardenbrass evidently thought he had to do with a fool (too fondly reliant

on her grace's reputation !) and fancied he was going to tell his own story, and carry matters in his own way.—Instead of which, he was forced to wait to be questioned; and as his cross-examination proceeded,—which would have done credit to the acutest Old Bailey counsel going,—the mercury fell and fell, till his audacity found itself below zero ! When compelled to admit that he was not a guinea richer than the year before, however much his present rank might necessitate an increase of fortune, he gradually collapsed into a very sorry personage ; and when the question of the sum to be settled on younger children came to be discussed, it was pretty evident that all the little Horsfalls junior to the son and heir, would be stared in the face by starvation on their entrance into life, as grimly as though their names were Sims.

If Gunter or Grange had only interest with her grace to procure the recipe for her salutation, when bowing him out after requesting time to communicate his intentions to Lady Wormington and her daughter, it might save them some hundreds a year in the management of their ice-house.

The duchess had of course taken precautions that an interview treating of matters so confidential, should be secure from interruption. But before Lord Hardenbrass's cab had cleared the courtyard, up drove the carriage of Lady Surcingle, to whom, I suppose, the porter had not the face, under such circumstances, to say "not at home;" for in she came;—"wild to see her dear duchess,—wild to offer congratulations on the interesting event in her family,—wild to say that though the match was not exactly all they had once anticipated for their sweet Jane, yet as she had not been able to *manage* the Seymour affair, or Croxton affair, or any other of her little plans, it was really fortunate she had so excellent a *pis-aller* to fall back upon, as a clever, shrewd, bustling, long-headed man, like Lord Hardenbrass."

My poor mistress was too well acquainted with the amiable disposition of her bosom friend, not to be perfectly aware that these impertinences were as leisurely prepared to wound her feelings as the



incisions of a cupping-glass; and consequently endured them with the stoicism of a Spartan.

“Lord Hardenbrass, poor man, is certainly very anxious for the match,” replied she, with a well assumed air of fastidious contempt,—“and has just been with me, exerting all his eloquence in his own favour. But I doubt whether we shall be able to make him acceptable to Jane, after all.”

“Why, I understood it was all settled?” cried Lady Surcingle, with an air of vexation.

“At present, he has nobody’s consent but his own,” replied the duchess;—“and as he has several rivals to contend against, I—but apropos to rivals, my dear Lady Surcingle,” cried she, interrupting herself with a smile of retaliation,—“I have never shown you a little treasure which I fear will put poor Chloe’s nose, short as it is, out of joint.—Rattle—Rattle!”—and in a moment I fulfilled my noble mistress’s purpose of giving a new turn to the conversation, by frolicking at her feet with a thousand graceful antics; which, like

those of many other puppies, served chiefly to make manifest my length of ear.

“A treasure indeed!”—cried the enraptured visitor,—“almost as small and pretty as Chloe!—And given you by Mr. Roper, of all people in the world!—The least beast in England to have proceeded from the *greatest*!—My dear duchess, you are really *too* fortunate!”

“Poor little thing,—it is wonderfully attached to me!”—said her grace. And I was too well bred a dog, and too worthy a descendant of my royal ancestor, not to confirm the lady’s statement by impassioned caresses. They did not commit me. I was not afraid of being asked whether my intentions were honourable. Alas! young and beardless as I was, I had profited only too well by the lessons of *roués* and *blasés* with whom I was compelled to associate at those vile smoking parties at Roper’s!

“If I were you, duchess, I would not let it kiss me in that way!”—cried Lady Surcingle, rising to depart. “The dogstar is raging,—the hydrophobia dreadfully about.—Remember the fate of poor Mrs. Duff.”

And away she went, bursting with envy; and, as the duchess had foreseen, much more disposed to prate about the sudden intimacy between herself and Mr. Roper, and the beautiful King Charles which was its offspring, than to criticise anew the match between Hardenbrass and Lady Jane.

Scarcely was she out of the house, before Lewson opened the door of the boudoir, peeping and on tiptoe, as if to assure herself of Lady Surcingle's departure, before she entreated the duchess to come up as soon as possible to her dressing-room.

“Lady Jane was returned,—returned in Lady Wormington's carriage,—and was waiting to speak to her grace,—and taking on so!”—

Between the young lady who was “taking on,” and the old one who had just taken herself off, I was beginning to have a surfeit of emotions. But I was not consulted. As Mrs. Lewson prepared to follow the duchess to her dressing-room, she whipped me up in her arms, and setting me down within the red-baize door, rendered me an unwill-

ing spectator of the scene between the aunt and niece !

“ Forgive me for coming to plague you again !” cried the poor girl, advancing to meet us in a truly deplorable condition.

“ You know I promised to call in Brook Street the very first place when I went out !” replied the duchess, almost angrily, as she sank into a chair, as if overwhelmed by her morning’s fatigues.

“ Yes ! but I came hither to prevent you—”

“ My dear Jane—”

“ I know all you would say to me, dearest aunt, —I know all you can possibly urge !”—interrupted her ladyship,—who seemed almost beside herself.

“ If you would only listen—”

“ I *did* listen this morning,” again interrupted her niece.—“ I heard with submission all you thought proper to say—”

“ But I have a great deal more to say now, my dear ; and—”

“ Nothing—*nothing* that you can say will have the smallest influence over my feelings !”—

“ Yet when I tell you that—”

“ Nothing, dear aunt Wigmore, will alter my determination *now*!—I *cannot* marry this man,—I *cannot*—I *will* not. It is useless to disguise from you or myself that I dislike and despise him.”

“ My dear Jane, if, instead of indulging in this violence you would permit me to—”

“ Nay more,—I love another !”—persisted her niece,—wildly disregarding her interruption. “ Painful as it is to my pride to admit the fact, if there were twenty Mrs. Jerninghams in the world, and he were twenty times twenty devoted to them, I could not prevent myself from preferring Sir Seymour Manners.”

“ I really believe, child, you are out of your senses !”—cried the duchess, surveying her niece with more contempt than compassion.

“ I am—or soon shall become so,” cried the poor girl, throwing back with an unconscious gesture her uncurled hair, then, as by a sudden impulse dropping on her knees before those of the duchess, —“ Save me from this marriage !”—said she,—“ if you ever loved me, dear aunt, or loved those tow hom

I belong, save me, save me from it.—I was mad when I gave my word !—I was mad when I fancied that for a single day, I could support the society of that coarse hard man,—I should detest him,—I cannot answer for what might be my feelings or my conduct—”

Though more angry than alarmed, the duchess could not witness, without some degree of sympathy, the genuine emotion of the distracted girl.

“Compose yourself my dear !”—said she,—“you are not to marry him.—The match is as impossible as you could wish ! If, instead of indulging in this frantic agitation, you had chosen to listen to me, you would have heard me denounce Lord Hardenbrass as an impostor.—His proposals amount, in fact, to an impertinence. I admit that I was precipitate,—I admit that I was wrong in announcing the engagement before I was certain about his having inherited a large fortune from his uncle.—But the mischief is not irremediable.—The report cannot have reached far.—I shall instantly take measures to contradict it; and though the Morning Post of to-morrow will have a formal announcement

of the marriage, so much the better ;—it will enable us to put in a contradiction—an “ we are authorized to state ” sort of affair,—which will be only an advantage. Get up—my dear ! ” said she,—trying to raise the head of Lady Jane, who seemed, in her sudden revulsion of feeling, to be hiding her face upon her knees,—“ get up and let me hurry on my things,—for I am anxious to carry all this news to my poor sister.”

And having at length succeeded in raising the head of the gentle girl,—she was about to rise from her chair ;—but on being released from its support, the form of poor Lady Jane rolled heavily on the floor !—

Overcome by her unexpected change of prospects, she had fainted !

## CHAPTER XII.

“ Paix ! ” dit à ce mot  
Caton, qui fait rage :—  
Lui il prêche en sot,  
Moi, je ris en sage —  
    Bon !  
La farira doudaine,  
    Gai !  
La farira dondé !

BERANGER.

WOULD you like me to describe Wigmore Castle for you, dear public,—with its surrounding glories of field, forest, and flood,—its embattled turrets,—its picturesque irregularity,—its historical associa-



tions with the wars of its two roses,—its—No! —by Jupiter, I won't!—For any roadbook could do it as well, or better:—and now that the emissaries of the illustrated periodicals go scouring the country with their sketch-books and wooden blocks in hand, hungering like Saturn after stones,—or like the dragon of Wantley, swallowing churches and steeples,—or the great Wellington, carrying castles and making towns and cities their own, it is really a work of supererogation to dabble in the picturesque!

I was vastly pleased with my translation to the ark of all the Wigmores.—Not because tired of London,—when emptiest, never lonely,—when quietest, never dull.—And though the duchess's friends were dispersed,—some to the moors to bring down black game,—some to the German Spas, to be brought down by black legs,—*mine* were still on the pavé; my poor Jem wandering

from doorstep to doorstep, and finding the scorching pavement painful, through his almost soleless shoes;—my sweet Mrs. Vernon in solitary confinement in her luxurious boudoir, listening to the cawing of the rooks in Chesterfield Gardens.

But I was overjoyed to be no longer obliged to knock under to the self-sufficiency of old Fido, who, in allusion to Wigmore Castle, always gave himself the airs of a travelled man. His tone of superiority in talking of “our preserves,”—“our forcing houses,”—“our Pinetum,”—“our picture gallery,”—“our deer,” was as provoking as the affability of a newly knighted sheriff.

And now, all these things were to become mine also,—that is, as much mine as *his*; and the first day I trotted after the duchess through her beautiful conservatory, on a lofty tree of the rose unique which in the stained glass of the cupola, “threw warm gules,” (as Keats hath it,) not on “Made-

line's white breast," but on its profusion of those spotless flowers which look as though they had sprung out of the grave of a maiden dead for love, variegating the pale blossoms into amethyst, sapphire, and amber,—I admit, that I felt in my turn unusually in conceit with my "hairy stockoratical" position.

For such creatures as the Simses, summer has only the existence assigned by the kalendar. For such people as the Simses, it

Dies when the leaves do, and falls in October !—

But dukes and and duchesses enjoy the happy privilege of the cuckoo :—

There is no sorrow in their song,

No winter in their year !—

Roses, always roses !—At Wigmore Castle, the duchess might have opened her eyes every morning of the three hundred and sixty-five, to the blossoms of a Midsummer day.

Yet, poor dear woman, a fit of the bores seemed to come over her, the moment the family coach crossed the drawbridge!—*She* appeared to regard those stately towers and echoing galleries, with as little zest, as those of the county Bastille! Forced for the last thirty years, to rehearse with “damnable iteration” the catalogue of their merits, she was sick of the sound and sight. A woman to whom the rumpling of the rose leaf was torture, found of course nothing but ennui in the glorious gloom of her stately woods, or in the lofty groinings of her baronial hall.

At present, I was not blasé by such contemplations. My soul was a “virgin page;”—and the impressions written there were all *couleur de rose*, or rather emblazoned in cobalt blue, crimson, and gold, the sacred colours of a missal.

Not that I pretend to be fond of rustic pleasures. I know my place. Nature did not intend me for

the broad glare of sunshine, or the rugged sod. The utmost a creature of *my* refinement ought to know of the country, is the velvet lawn, or smooth glaxis,—the ambrosial atmosphere of a conservatory,—or at most, the *bel respiro* of a kiosk or summer-house. But our still more appropriate pleasaunce, is a well-aired, well-carpeted summer-room, opening to a flower-garden; and one of my chief satisfactions at Wigmore Castle, was, that it was judged sufficient exercise for me to amble by the side of her grace, or Lewson, along the grand corridor or state apartments.—For to *me* a world was contained within that massive pile.

“A laboured quarry above ground”—the very Thebes of lapdogs, its hundred doors sufficed me. I never wished to stir beyond its marble halls. I was not created for *le grand air*!

One of the repulsivilities of Wigmore to “miladi her grace,” however, was, that, during her resi-

dence there, the Duke of Wigmore necessarily resumed his share in the apportionment of her existence. Like a sheet of paper held to the fire after being inscribed with sympathetic ink, at Wigmore the previously invisible husband suddenly appeared on the surface.—Not that he appeared disagreeably; for he was a well-bred, — well-natured, — well-looking man. But *any thing* so unaccustomed, was *de trop*. If our own souls, suddenly materialized, were to walk side by side with our bodies, we should find them an uncomfortable appendage.

We arrived at the castle, however, without him. Aware, perhaps, of the superfluousness of his company in his domestic circle, or dreading the impossibility of finding relief at White's or the Carlton, or,—no matter where,—he continued to be chronically afflicted by an obstinate gout, which, every year, caused him to be ordered to the last new bathing-place in fashion,—Wisbaden,—Marienbad,—Kis-

singen,—Hesse-Homburg,—or whenever the gush of nature's kettle might be smoking in the vicinity of some speculator shrewd enough to signalize its issue by a flourish of trumpets.

For the Brünnen of Nassau and Bavaria keep a physician apiece to puff them, as Moses and Mechi a poet; and right thankful are anti-domestic dukes, and *ennuyée* marchionesses, that the success of their impositions justifies new speculators in groping annually in new districts, with the view of finding a spring of sufficiently nasty water, to cure still nastier disorders.

When we reached the halls of his ancestors, his grace was still at Saxe Schivischenbad, a spring discovered within a year or two, somewhere in the Warmwasserland lying between the Rhine and the Elbe ; concerning which, a charming work had been written by a charming writer, full of charming woodcuts and vignettes,—with an appendix as dry

as chaff, containing an analysis of the waters by Professor von Crucibilius of Prague, Knight of the Spread Eagle, or Swan with two necks, or something of that description,—informing one what salts were held in solution in the waters, and what bodies had been preserved from *dissolution* on the spot.

Merely to skim the book, was almost enough to cure the most obstinate fit of the gout;—and between the salubrity of the atmosphere promised him by the letter-press, the picturesque scenery guaranteed by the prints, and the distinguished society vouched for by the gullibility of ennobled human nature, his grace found himself one of the “illustrious visitors” to a straggling wooden village, worthy the shores of the Mississippi;—having a spring that tasted like the fountain-head of all the lucifer matches of enlightened Europe,—surrounded by a shrubbery consisting of gravel



walks disdaining the oppression of the garden roller, (the shingle as loose as his grace's own principles,) and plantations of scrubby firs, not reaching to his knee, and proudly overlooked by the watering-pot!

Of the company assembled there, it would be as useless as invidious to speak:—most of them being distinguished by *aliases* so innumerable, that to determine their identity were as difficult as to resolve *which* is the true Farina, and *ea*uthentic at Cologne.

But, alas! the dear duchess was at length forced to exclaim, in the words of Martial, concerning her other half, either better or worse:—

Whether we try to sell thee or to spout thee,

There is no living with thee or without thee!—

For though the castle was at all times dull as a rainy day, during the absence of the Duke of Wigmore, it became duller than a foggy one; her grace

having from time immemorial, observed the etiquette of seeing no company during his absence.

Her own family, of course, and *his*, not counting for company, came and went as usual ;—and we all know the value of a family party in a country-house, where people are too well-bred to quarrel, and too ill-natured not to feel quarrelsome.

As to poor dear Lady Jane, whom the duchess had insisted upon carrying with her on the old plea of the dampness of Barnsford, and the necessity that she should be diverted after the awkward rupture of her marriage, she led a sad life of it ; trying, like Madame de Pompadour, to amuse an unamuseable woman, by listening to stories she had heard till they were worn so threadbare, that even the duchess seemed to think they required mending ; yet not daring to seem conscious of the interpolations in the text of the new edition.

In short, it was a relief to us all when the paper

announced among the arrivals in town, “ His grace the Duke of Wigmore at Wigmore House from the German baths ;” and among the departures, “ His grace the Duke of Wigmore from Wigmore House for Wigmore Castle ;” a man of such moral magnitude being, of course, unable to eat a sandwich and change his boots in his own house in passing through London, without being penny-a-lined into a paragraph !

The duchess was sincerely delighted to see him ; for he brought a charming collection of Bohemian glass,—Augsburg trinkets,—and Nuremberg *charges*,—which varied for a few hours the monotony of her day,—as rubbish thrown into the darkest mill-pool produces light and dancing bubbles on the surface. Nor was his grace, I suspect, less pleased to see herself ; because installed in a noble suite of rooms, attended by a well-ordered establishment,—looking forth upon a richly culti-

vated landscape,—surrounded by new books, and amusing periodicals,—and above all, without the drawback of equivocal society or importunate intrusion.—If such a home, even with a disagreeable wife in it, were not an excellent exchange for the straggling, scrambling, half-civilized life of a German bathing place, I, Rattle, am so stupid a dog as for once to be mistaken !

Fido and myself,—but I forget that already the tables were turned, and that I am entitled to write I and Fido, “*ego et pater meus*,” were enchanted to find the champagne corks flying again, the keepers and their helots on the alert, and signs of life revivifying the whole establishment. For in a dull house, the lapdogs have no sinecure ; and I had been forced by the duchess’s perpetual apostrophes to keep my tail on the continual wag, like Sir Robert Peel by the eternal compliments of the county members, who are waiting for their peerages.

The only person, in fact, to whom the duke's arrival appeared a matter of indifference, was Lady Jane. But to say the truth, I do not think she would have taken much notice, had Julius Cæsar or the Duke of Wellington, or even the dog of Montargis, come scratching at the castle gate.

Was it to revenge himself for her total unconcern, or was it genuine naïveté, which, on the evening of his return, induced his grace suddenly to observe to the duchess, who was questioning him about Wisbaden,—“ Filled with the usual mob from London and St. Petersburg!—Russian generals, and English members of parliament; the latter accosting the former with “ Porlee voo Frongsay ? ”—the former responding to the latter, —“ Yees, sare, very mosh; and *you* ? ”

“ I detest Wisbaden ! ”—said the duchess peevishly.—“ People are always in a hurry there,—as if they did not come to stay,—but wanted to get on,—or off.”

“ I found it amusing enough, however, for four-and-twenty hours,”—resumed the duke. “ A tremendous scandal had just exploded,—and all was smoke and consternation !”

“ A scandal?—English of course !—The English are the only people who create catastrophes wherever they go !”

“ Because they are more in earnest than other people !” replied the duke, (who, though boasting of a French valet and French cook, and, above all, principles *plus Parisien qu'à Paris*, piqued himself on being a John Bull !) “ But the delinquents in this instance *were* English.”

“ People of society ?”—demanded his wife, who had very little sympathy to bestow, out of her hairy-stockoratical district.

“ Yes,—I think I have seen young Manners at White's.”

“ *Manners ?—What Manners ?*”

“ A Wiltshire family?—a Sir Something Manners,—at least my courier persisted in calling him ‘Milor,’—‘*parceque c’était un baromètre d’Angleterre,*’—by which I presume he meant ‘baronet.’—”

“ Not *Sir Seymour* Manners?”—cried the duchess, starting from her recumbent posture to the great endangerment of my comfort.

“ Precisely!—*Seymour* *was* his name, for I remember wondering whether he were anything to Hertford.”

“ Then the other delinquent was certainly that odious Mrs. Jerningham!”—added the duchess.

“ Her name was certainly Jerningham;—but the people at Wisbaden swore she was anything but odious. She passed *there* for the prettiest woman of the season.”

“ At those German baths, any body passes for pretty who has pink-and-white enough, and cheek-

bones that project like the pillars of Hercules," said the duchess. "But did these foolish people run away?"

"On the contrary,—it was the husband who ran away, and left them together. He seems to be a man who has the knack of running away; for, two years ago, he ran away with his wife, who was an heiress. But *this* time, he knew better; and ran back to Wiltshire, leaving Sir Manners Seymour to—"

"Sir Seymour Manners,"—emended the duchess in a low voice.

"Leaving Sir Seymour Manners to take care of the silly woman he had been assisting to render the laughing-stock of the place."

"Were they all travelling together, then?"

"No; I think I understood that Manners, who had been going on in a sad, wild, reckless manner since his arrival at the baths, playing *gros jeu*, and



on the brink of half-a-dozen duels a day,—was overtaken by these Jerninghams, (who are country neighbours of his in England,) and that the husband was his second in some affair; and the wife —But where is Jane running to?” inquired the duke of his wife, as her niece precipitately left the room.

“ Take no notice,” rejoined her grace, with a confidential nod. “ Sir Seymour Manners is an old flame of hers, and has been the cause of her refusing several excellent matches! I am delighted this *escapade* should have occurred,—and above all, that you should have been on the spot to bring us the first news of it;—for it will put an end to Jane’s nonsense, at once and for ever. Manners went abroad the very day her foolish engagement with Lord Hardenbrass was declared; and I had not a guess what was become of him, and was weak enough to fancy he might have been cut up by her

conduct towards him. And you see he was all the time indulging in every species of excess ! What fools girls are, to fancy a man ever frets after them !”

The duke replied by a supercilious smile. *I* held my peace. But I only thought the more, that *perhaps* Lady Jane and Lord Hardenbrass *might* be at the bottom of the rouge et noir,—and duels,—and even of the Jerningham *esclandre* !

“ I hope to goodness,” said the duke after a long pause of serene deliberation, “ that Jane will not think it necessary to take this affair *au serieux*, or fancy herself called upon to be a victim, and die of a broken heart ! Of all nuisances in a house, a young lady pining for love upon ass’s milk and Schubert’s romances, is to me the most insupportable !”

“ Jane is a very reasonable girl,” pleaded the duchess, warming in defence of her own flesh and

blood;—"I do not think her likely to make herself troublesome or absurd. It is only natural she should feel a little shocked at hearing of it all so abruptly."

"I feel the more anxious from having asked a large party of my German friends here for pheasant shooting," added the duke: "the Hereditary Prince of Saxe Krautland and his suite,—Count and Countess Rodolph Trichstenstein,—the Duke of Hesse-Rudenberg, and half a dozen others. As I wish to give them the best possible impression of an English country-house, it would be a bore to have one's gaieties interrupted."

"My sister will want poor Jane back again before the first of October,"—replied Miladi her grace, delighted at the prospect of a large party in the house,—more especially a party of new people, with whom there would be fresh ground to break, and whose admiration would be called

forth by the trinkets, fopperies, and grandeurs with which her present circle of acquaintance was familiar as its glove. “But what English are we to have?—I suppose you do not mean the party to be exclusively foreign?”

“On the contrary,—a few English are indispensable;—such English as will inspire these people with the highest opinion of our national merits.”

“Personal, or intellectual?”—

“If possible, both; but it is something to secure the former.—I caught a glimpse of that handsome young son of Normanford’s as I came through town, and invited *him*.”

“Lord Algernon Howarth?”—

“Lord Algernon,—who was delighted at the prospect of meeting the Wisbaden people; for I promised him Countess Rodolph should give him the fullest particulars about the Jerningham affair; Manners being his intimate friend.—But what

ladies have we on the list for October besides yourself and Lady Jane?—Emily, of course?”

“ Lady Rosamel comes next week.—But as she brings the four children, it would be desirable that she postponed her visit till after this gay party has taken place.”

“ Why so?”

“ Children are such a nuisance in a party of that kind !”

“ Emily has too much tact to let *hers* become a nuisance any where, least of all in their grandfather’s house.—I always feel as if both she and they, poor things, had as good a right to be here as ourselves;—and if Emily were wise, she would take up her quarters here altogether.”

“ God forbid !”—ejaculated the duchess,—on whom the society of her amiable daughter-in-law imposed considerable restraint.—“ Lady Rosamel is a charming young woman. But I must say I think Rosamel park a better place to bring up her

children, than this house,—so irregular in point of hours, and the rules and ceremonies of life.—She is here for two months every autumn, which is enough for all parties,—and almost too much for *me*.”

The Duchess of Wigmore was in fact held disagreeably in check by the high-principled propriety of the beautiful widow of her son. The early marriage of the Marquis of Rosamel, who was an only child, had been vehemently opposed by both his parents. And though the same gentleness and high qualifications which had encouraged the young lord to brave their displeasure in fulfilling his engagement, had very soon made a convert of her father-in-law, the Duchess could not bear that a mere Miss Herbert, issued from the younger son of a junior branch of a noble family, should be entitled to enjoy hereafter the same diamonds and precedence as herself,—whose pedigree was almost as unimpeachable as that of her two

lapdogs. But though this cause of enmity was removed by Lord Rosamel's untimely death, her grace could never take cordially to one by whose impending superiority of nature her pretensions were stunted like the growth of a weed by the vicinity of some lofty tree.

There was not, indeed, a point in Lady Rosamel's manners, appearance, or conduct, to which she could hang an objection; and the children, whom the Duke of Wigmore regarded with as much pride as affection as the future representatives of honours which but for them would have merged in a collateral line, were charming as children could be.—Still, they were hers: and the duchess had never opened to them the heart so susceptible to the sportive attractions of Rattle and Fido.

It had always been her intention that her son should marry one of his cousins, the Ladies Barnsford; and even in his grave, she had not forgiven him the disappointment.

Making it a point to adopt her grace's sentiments as my own whenever it was possible, I instinctively apprehended the arrival of this daughter-in-law and these grandchildren. The marchioness might take it into her head to bring with her the odious terrier so opprobriated by Fido ; and from the hints let fall by Lewson, I had little doubt that I should be tormented to death by the little marquis and his brothers.

The prospects of seeing the Rodolph Trichstensteins consoled me. From *their* chitchat I might gather more accurate notions of the Jerningham affair, of which the Duke of Wigmore's *précis* was more concise than precise ;—and which he explained with a confusion of ideas worthy of his place in parliament.

For be it remembered that in the establishment of the pretty, affected Mrs. Jerningham, abided my lamented mother, whose prospects in life might be seriously impaired by the indiscretion of her lady !



Our species has been made, from Homer's time to Monckton Milnes's, the standard of a thousand opprobrious comparisons: as

Κύνος ὀμματ' ἔχων.

But it is easy to give a dog an ill name; and well I know that many who profess and call themselves Christians, might take pattern by my filial anxieties in the matter of Mimi, mamma mia.

Nor was the general prospect of the party unexciting. Most people are pleasanter in any other country than their own. Even the English, like Thames water, become brilliant and sparkling by exportation to southern latitudes; and the Germans, like Hock, are better everywhere than on their native soil.—The necessity of exertion to render [themselves acceptable to foreigners overcomes their natural indolence and self-absorption.

Nor had I yet enjoyed a specimen of the *vie de château* so<sup>ly</sup> praised by foreigners as the brightest phase of English sociability;—the existence which

it requires twenty thousand a year, and half-a-dozen descents of gentility, to create with even moderate success. I had heard it said in London, of many people *there* pronounced to be insupportable, that they were “ charming in a country-house;” from which I inferred that a peculiar order of accomplishment was indispensable for this important branch of public service.

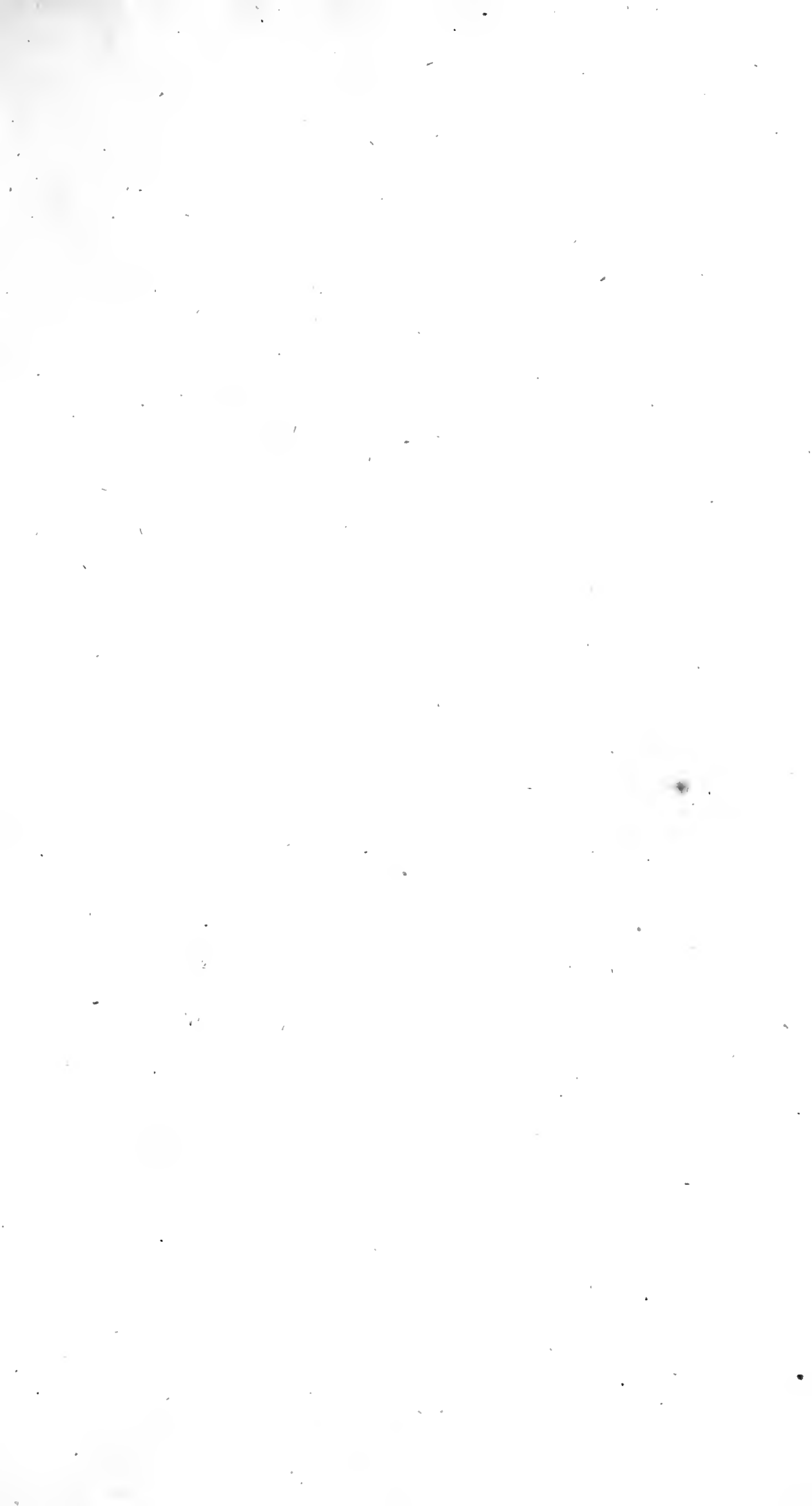
I own I was desirous to judge for myself of the species of wit which was judged worthy of being bottled up for winter consumption; and the morality regarded as an article stout enough for country wear.

“ *Milor et guêtres*” used to be a proverbial caricature on the continent. It was time I should become acquainted with the original at home.

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